



THE FARMER CITIZEN  
AT WAR





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TORONTO

# THE FARMER CITIZEN AT WAR

BY  
HOWARD R. TOLLEY

*"Let a person have nothing to do for his  
country and he will not care for it."*

—JOHN STUART MILL

THE MACMILLAN COMPANY

*New York • 1943*

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## Foreword

It is a pleasure to write an introduction to a book written by a man whom I have known so intimately for twenty years. I first knew Howard Tolley as an expert in the calculation of correlation coefficients. Raised on an Indiana farm, Mr. Tolley for a time wanted to be a mathematician. His gift for precise, logical reasoning was great. But as time went on his vision widened and he became one of the men most responsible for building the Bureau of Agricultural Economics into one of the greatest agencies of public service. Continuously for more than twenty years he has associated with our leading farmers and economists as well as with the technicians of government. His book is neither simple nor highly spiced. It is solid and detailed and worth the careful study of those who wish to think seriously about the future.

H. A. WALLACE

September 24, 1942  
United States Senate  
Washington, D.C.



## Acknowledgment

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HOWARD R. TOLLEY



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THE FARMER CITIZEN  
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# I

## The War on the Home Front

"For if the trumpet give an uncertain sound, who shall prepare himself to the battle? So likewise ye, except ye utter by the tongue words easy to be understood, how shall it be known what is spoken? for ye shall speak into the air."—*1 Cor. 14:8, 9.*

The American people are now at war, committed to a time of mass death inflicted and endured, to a contest with Leviathan. It is a prospect filled with harsh imperatives, charged with pain. Sooner or later each of us may expect to be searched out by the violence abroad in the world. Some of us have lived on the fat of the land. Some have merely dreamed of it. But now all that is past. The ordeal has come, and is sure to find us out, whether we are uniformed or not, countryman or city dweller, propertied or stripped. In good time, having come to grips with our enemies, we may be sure that no cranny will be left for the schemers, for those who think to ride out the storm snugged down. For it takes no prophet to see that our country's very claim to self-determination is threatened, or that, if this should be lost, all other claims would be meaningless.

Arrayed against the democratic peoples are men driven by a belief as old as Attila: that cold greed and cold intelligence, scorning human rights and decency, can master the world. Answering them again, this time with bomb and bayonet, are free men who say it shall not be, that instead

another Carthage must be destroyed, and that out of its destruction can be fashioned a better and nobler world for all men of good will. On the battlefields the convictions of a democratic people are heard and felt in tones of thunder and screaming shell.

On the home battlefield, however, it is less easy to see the clear outlines not only of the foe, but of the great cause that binds Americans and their allies together in common struggle. It goes without saying that the more formidable the enemy's material and ideological weapons, the more necessary it is that the objectives of the United Nations and specifically of the United States be perfectly clear, not only to some but to all of the millions who compose the American people—Pole, Anglo-Saxon, Swede, Negro, and others; industrialist, banker, merchant, landholder, sharecropper. The goal is the goal of all, not of one group or several groups. To make that plain, to imbed that in the soul of every kind of American, is a major job on the home front.

In a day of mass armies, it is idle to think that wars are won by soldiers alone. What happens back of the lines is at least equally important with what happens at the front, for it is at home that the will to fight is born, there that soldiers are reared, there that the munitions production and civilian sacrifice occur. In the war of today, civilian strength and civilian conviction in the worth of the democratic system is an ingredient as necessary to victory as are fighting men, and guns, and tanks, and ships, and planes.

War now is not at all like war in the past. Now it is "total war." What that means in terms of individuals, Americans have been slow to realize. Indeed, it has not yet been fully comprehended. Perhaps it will not be pos-

sible for the American people to feel this deeply until they are hurt more than they have been hurt. For the objective of "total war" is the use to the fullest degree of the complete energy of every man, woman, and child, of every machine and resource for victory. In practice, of course, this objective is never fully achieved, human beings remaining human even in the straight-jacket of the most iron of totalitarian states.

For that matter, most of us in this country believe pretty thoroughly that the enlistment of the full energy of a people can be done best through the democratic ways worked out here; and this book is simply an attempt to document that belief—perhaps a fumbling but nonetheless earnest effort to show how it can be applied to win the war and to "maintain the security of the peace that follows," as President Roosevelt has said.

The nation has not yet drawn heavily enough upon the powerful reserves of energy that democracy supplies. More than any other way of life, democracy has the greatest potentialities just because it takes for granted the dignity and power of the single human being and calls upon him to exercise that dignity and power in those ways that best fit his capacity. The very implication that he is a free and responsible citizen is enough to summon greater effort by the citizen than can be called forth by any sort of imposed discipline or play of psychological device upon his emotions.

In order to win the war, therefore, the country needs to keep this fact squarely in front of its individual and collective eyes: that free men, fighting for what they believe, are stronger than men subject to any kind of domination. This does not mean that we can live in war as we live in



peace. But it does mean that ready consent, eager response, are necessary in the change from peacetime to wartime habits and disciplines.

World War I taught us what a democracy can do, if it wishes, in temporarily curbing the freedom of its people as a measure of war, yet springing back at once to full democracy when the peril is past. For self-preservation, numerous curbs are being imposed and will continue to be imposed during the course of the current war. Such action is inevitable. Our first job, of course, is to destroy the enemy at the gate. The Axis foe is the most dire, most immediate threat to our democracy. Yet the people must not forget that even the self-imposed imperatives of war are different from freedom itself; and they should be ready for the return to democratic peace.

The words of Lincoln put it clearly for us. Invited to lecture in Boston, a year or so before he was elected to the presidency, he could not go. Instead, he wrote a letter in which he said; "It is now no child's play to save the principles of Jefferson from total overthrow in this nation." It is not possible to convince anyone "that the simpler propositions of Euclid are true" if "the definitions and axioms are denied," he went on, and "the principles of Jefferson are the definitions and axioms of free society." Then in words that could have been hurled at the Axis only yesterday, he added: "Yet they are denied and evaded, with no small show of success. One dashinglly calls them 'glittering generalities.' And others insidiously argue that they apply to 'superior races.' These expressions, differing in form, are identical in object and effect—the supplanting of the principles of free government. They are the vanguard, the miners and sappers of returning despotism. We

must repulse them, or they will subjugate us. This is a world of compensation; and he who would be no slave must consent to have no slave."

So great is the present threat to our institutions that in countering it we may overshoot the mark. In order to win, the American economy and, in reflex, the very way of life itself, must be drastically altered. Every day this is happening, and it will stop only when necessity no longer demands expansion. The American purpose, beneath all its dissensions, is superlatively humanitarian. In order to realize this purpose the typical indecisions of the humanitarian must be avoided. In doing this, in curbing the plague of nihilism, it is easy for those in authority to become infected with a disregard for liberty of the individual, the single man, and so work the death of our democratic ideals, even while defending them.

The outlook demands both passion and intelligence, alike in the common man and in those who lead the way. At the very outset of war, the people became conscious of the need for decisive action, and restive at the strain of delay in action. It would be so much easier to give way, to open the gate of hard fiat with no thought of the future. But the other, more difficult way—the way of human liberty—is the only course for this democracy if it is to survive as such.

In cold fact, there can be no way but the democratic way in America, except a way of blood. The roots of democracy run deep, in the history and tradition and outlook of the American people, and there are no competing roots. The people of this nation, all of them, are still fairly close to the land, still within the scope of its man-and-land idea of individual independence, still grappling unfamil-

ially with the problems of urban and industrial living. Practically considered, it may be that farm people will take the lead in the job of fusing America into a united and burning purpose in this war. These are the thirty million souls who in one way or another live directly off the land: the farmers, indeed the embattled farmers of the Revolution, of the South and West of Civil War days, the farmers who sent over a million men into the first World War. In all of us there is a good deal of the soil yet. Few Americans but have a father or a grandfather who made his living from the land, and if we did not grow up on or near a farm ourselves, at least most of us spent vacations there or sat in family circles where the ancient lore of the seasons and the ancient lore of farm people were part of the talk. In this kinship to the soil there is also a strong color of the frontier. Americans, by and large, still like to go their own way; they like to settle things for themselves; they like freedom not just for its own sake but because they like to live among other people who are free. And they have a deep-seated desire to go ahead on their own hook and get things done.

It seems pretty clear that this is the way the people have reacted to the fact of war. Consistently since Pearl Harbor, there has been evidence that the people at large were ready and willing for any steps, indeed that they were disappointed when more drastic action than was feasible was not taken at once. It is clear that they have not fully understood why some actions were taken and others not.

Yet the very essence of the superiority of democracy to the strange new-old politico-religions that have arisen in the world is that it depends upon the understanding of its citizens for its functioning. Not just a bare majority, but

a very large majority, needs to understand. For the putting forth of the mighty effort that faces it, the nation cannot afford to waive the strength of any citizen to whom it is possible to give a share in the struggle. If the citizenry are to participate fully in the war effort, they need to agree wholeheartedly, with no reservations whatever, that the effort is worth while. And for such agreement, such full consent, they must understand what is expected of them; they must feel that sacrifices are being made by all alike, and they must have definite jobs to do to help win the war.

### *Freedom for Facts and Speech*

Let us consider first the matter of understanding. There is widespread admiration of President Roosevelt's success as an interpreter of the popular will, the sympathetic response he elicits as a radio speaker, and his ability to draw forth confidence from great masses of people. In large part, at least, this power can be traced back to his refusal to "talk down" to people, and his assumption that they are adults who are worthy of the responsibilities of democracy. From this assumption springs that sympathy without which government is feeble. From it, too, springs the requirement for explaining fully and candidly whatever necessities there are for severe regimens, for rationing, for control of prices, for the placing of manpower where it will do the most good, for all of the multiplied complex actions that war will demand. Certainly, information cannot be irresponsibly published or other actions taken that will enable our enemy to gain a victory, even a small one. Certainly, no one can hesitate to act when many human lives are involved. Yet it is possible to make sure that, whenever information is suppressed or actions are

taken that are likely to cause confusions or uncertainties, such information and such actions definitely would be of help to the enemy. And it is possible to make sure that the people understand as fully as possible the necessities for these actions.

This question of censorship is constantly before us now. On the whole, it has been well handled thus far in this war, both as to the issuance of information by the government and by private sources such as newspapers and the radio. Yet it is a day-to-day thing, and sometimes the line is very thin between what will "give aid and comfort to the enemy" and what our own people need to know. Those in authority have to be very careful to draw that line right. At bottom, of course, the question is one of free speech, the guaranty of the very first amendment in the Bill of Rights.

It needs always to be remembered by censors, would-be censors, or even those interested in the problems of censorship, that actions affecting the dissemination of facts are about as important as any actions that can be taken in a democracy. Strict demarcation of the bounds of censorship in wartime is as much a hallmark of our democracy as is the preference of Thomas Jefferson for a free press above most of the institutions of liberty. For the effective operation of democracy, by definition, demands an informed citizenry, in war as in peace. In other words, the citizen cannot effectively take part in the workings of democracy unless he has the fullest possible access to the information he needs on which to base his actions. Recently, James R. Mock, of the National Archives, a long-time student of censorship problems in the last great war, has said, "Slanting of the news is not the real purpose of

ensorship," and "Influencing the public should be left to an intelligent ministry of information." "Unless the censors are able men who exercise rare common sense, the effect of censorship may be just the opposite of the effect desired," he added. "While there may be suppression of information at the source to keep the enemy in ignorance, the eventual effect of that action may be to keep our own citizens unaware of reverses, the knowledge of which affects adversely public morale when those defeats finally become known. When long-concealed information about disasters and poor leadership is released, the time has passed when the public can do much more than play the part of voluble but helpless back-seat drivers.

"As long as we are a democracy, the citizens have rights that no censorship should set aside. They are entitled to know at all times what their Government and their armed forces have done . . . Even in wartime, a democracy needs information rather than censorship—except censorship at the source."

The larger question has seldom been put better or answered better than by that most anti-autocratic of all philosophers, Mr. Justice Holmes. On the one hand, in the *Schenck* case, Justice Holmes said, "The character of every act depends upon the circumstances in which it is done" and then added, "The question in every case is whether the works used are used in such circumstances and are of such nature as to create a clear and present danger that they will bring about the substantive evils that Congress has a right to prevent." The question is one "of proximity and degree," and "when a nation is at war many things that might be said in time of peace are such a hindrance to its effort that their utterance will not be endured

so long as men fight and that no Court could regard them as protected by any Constitutional right."

Nine months later in the same year, 1919, Holmes stated the other side of the same proposition. In the *Abrams* case, he said, "When men have realized that time has upset many fighting faiths, they may come to believe even more than they believe the very foundations of their own conduct that the ultimate good desired is better reached by free trade in ideas—that the best test of truth is the power of the thought to get itself accepted in the competition of the market, and that truth is the only ground upon which their wishes safely can be carried out." At any rate, that "is the theory of our Constitution," and while the Constitution "is part of our system I think that we should be eternally vigilant against attempts to check the expression of opinions that we loathe and believe to be fraught with death, unless they so imminently threaten immediate interference with the lawful and pressing purposes of the law that an immediate check is required to save the country." He concluded, "Only the emergency that makes it immediately dangerous to leave the correction of evil counsels to time warrants making any exception to the sweeping command, 'Congress shall make no law . . . abridging the freedom of speech.'"

### *Equal Privilege, Equal Sacrifice*

But a second major factor in civilian participation in war needs to be considered here, a factor mentioned earlier. This is the imperative that calls for spreading the sacrifices. Everyone knows now that sacrifices will have to be made to win this struggle. For three years now the newspapers and the radio have told their tales of horror.

They have told what happened to France, they have told of the sufferings of the Poles, the Norwegians, the Danes, the Czechs, the Greeks, and the other peoples who are enslaved. And the world knows how the valiant British rallied on their island, and what they have paid already in "blood, sweat, and tears" simply in order to be free.

The only thing the British were sure they would win by beating off the Nazis was their freedom. But that was enough. They had learned the lesson all too well. As one of their most famous writers, Somerset Maugham, has pointed out, "If a nation values anything more than freedom, it will lose its freedom, and the irony of it is that if it is comfort or money that it values more it will lose that too." Americans, too, are ready and willing to go to the limit to preserve their freedom, regardless of their economic status. They know that their freedom itself is the best guarantee of economic opportunity. Yet true liberty implies that the paths of opportunity will remain open, and true democracy implies that no person or group of persons will be exempt from the burdens of war. Democracy means democracy in sacrifice as well as in privilege.

Here again there is the example of England. During its major ordeals, the national backbone of England was stiffened because of the conviction that all or nearly all were sharing the suffering, the privation, and the hardships in the lines behind the white cliffs of Dover. The history of this and other wars gives us ample lessons to this effect, and most Americans are solidly agreed upon that point.

It ought to be recognized, however, that this matter of equalization goes somewhat deeper. In order for the nation to draw upon the springs of energy inherent in its citizens, government needs also to assure them that we are



fighting for even greater equality of opportunity in the future in our own country than has existed in the past. From many studies and reports made by the Department of Agriculture in the past year or so, it is perfectly clear that a major drag upon farm production in those spots where it lagged was caused by fear of a post-war collapse. Many farmers remember what happened to them in the bitter years after the last war. Agriculture as a group was underprivileged, and of course within that underprivileged group itself there were the very poor, the ragged who had never had much of an economic stake in democracy. This does not impute to them any lack of patriotism. What is meant is that such emotions tend to impose subconscious fetters upon the most willing patriot. This is true of all men, farmers as well as others.

Thus, those whom the people have placed in authority ought to remember what happened before; they need to let our people know that this fight is for a world of greater economic opportunity as well as a free world and a peaceful world. To cite the President again, it is not alone his persuasive sincerity that has won people to him but also his concern for that one-third of a nation he has characterized as "ill-fed, ill-clothed, and ill-housed." Now, people who have been in that one-third will not be roused to participate in the war as fully as will be necessary unless they can look forward at least to an improved opportunity to do better. Certainly, they will prefer freedom to slavery; and they will fight to keep freedom, regardless of anything else. Yet their hearts and souls will be much more in the fight if they know that the promises implicit in America are being made good faster and faster.

It is not necessary now that people should want for

decent food and decent clothing and decent housing. As Milo Perkins has pointed out, for the first time in human history man has the ability to supply all of mankind with these necessities. All that is lacking is the machinery for making the means available to all men everywhere. Thus, it is not a vain boast nor is it a utopian imagining, to tell our people that this much at any rate they can have, and certainly it is true that democracy can come closer to giving it to them than any other system.

*130,000,000 Shares in Winning the War*

But it will not be enough if government depends wholly upon explanation. Words can be used too much. For the full exercise of the democratic power, authority must strive to approach the ideal of giving every citizen the fullest possible share in victory and in its attainment. Here is the third, and chief, factor in obtaining full participation of all citizens in winning the war. All of our people need to feel—every citizen, if possible—that they are needed to win the war and that they are being given a chance to work toward winning it. This does not mean simply telling them they are useful; it means giving them useful work to do. They must be drawn into the war effort if they are to feel it. Let us not labor the point here, since that is the principal theme of this whole book. Rather, let us turn for a moment to an extraordinary scientific buttress for this belief that the ordinary citizen must be entrusted with a major part of the job of winning the war. It is contained in a recent book by R. D. Gillespie, who is not only physician for psychological medicine in Guy's Hospital, London, but also a wing commander of the Royal Air Force Volunteer Reserve. Dr. Gillespie's book draws upon his

extensive experience to discuss the relative psychological effects of war upon civilian and combatant. He has discovered that "one of the most striking things about the effects of the war on the civilian population has been the relative rarity of pathological mental disturbance among the civilians exposed to air raids." One example he cites is that of the Sutton Emergency Hospital, in a very heavily bombed London area, where between September 2, 1939, and August 31, 1941, but 283 civilian patients were admitted as against 2023 from the military services. "Guy's Hospital . . .," he goes on, "is in the middle of one of the most frequently bombed areas of London, and in the midst of a large population area of the poorer classes. Yet the psychiatric out-patient department which still functions there records very few cases of neuroses attributable to war conditions. The patients who do come, with few exceptions, present mainly the same problems as in peacetime. There are only a few who exhibit the results of the terrifying experiences which so many of the population have had in that area."

This is surprising enough testimony, but of even greater interest is Dr. Gillespie's explanation of the reason for this remarkable difference between civilian and soldier:

"It is notable in the present war that while anxiety neuroses have very occasionally occurred among flying personnel, hysterical reactions are so rare among flying crews as to be a medical curiosity. These observations in association with the superb morale of the R.A.F. support the thesis that the greater the sense of individual responsibility the less likelihood of neuroses, and that the more widely this sense of responsibility can be spread without impairing the cohesion of the group the rarer are psychoneurotic

illnesses going to be." Dr. Gillespie recalls a remark made to him by a German evacuee, to the effect that the British were "a more disciplined people" than the Germans. It turned out that this discipline was a "strong inner discipline." To Dr. Gillespie this was reminiscent of Herodotus: "It is indeed clear that political equality is in every way a valuable thing, if we recollect that the Athenians when they were governed by a tyrant in no way outstripped their neighbors in courage, but when they got rid of their tyrants they shot far ahead. It is clear that when held in subjection they played the coward, for their efforts would only have served the interests of their master, but when they got free every man was eager to strive in his own interests." The conclusion of the doctor is well worth quoting: "The mainspring of the quiet endurance of the ordinary man in Britain is his pride and the knowledge that he is free, so far as freedom is possible in a community at war, and that he is determined whatever happens to preserve that freedom, which, in the words of an old Scottish covenant made some hundreds of years ago, 'no good man loses save with his life.' "

### *The Farmer Citizen in Other Wars*

To the extent, then, that the whole people can be enlisted for war, by so much will the war be shortened and lives saved. Abstractions of political theory or psychology are idle in pointing up this stern alternative. This country has fought wars before, and the measure of our success always has been the extent to which our whole people was involved in the effort to win. It will be profitable here to recall briefly some of these experiences.

In the Revolutionary War the brunt of the task was

borne, as now, by a citizen army. This army was recruited from the ranks of the log-cabin farmer, the frontiersman, the former indentured servant, the "greasy mechanic" of the towns. Interests and sympathies among the colonists were divided, the conservatives apathetic, when not actively hostile, to revolutionary aims. In this apathy, and in the apathy of their supporters in the homeland lay the reason for their defeat. The blazing print of Tom Paine's *Common Sense* and the lusty phrases of Sam Adams were far from apathetic. This citizen army prevailed in a people's war for freedom because they felt it was their fight and felt it more deeply than their foes. They prevailed because, as the most profoundly understanding of Americans, Abraham Lincoln, said in looking back on them, they "supposed superior devotion to the personal rights of men, holding the rights of property to be secondary only, and greatly inferior." They wanted land and freedom from senselessly discriminatory debt and taxation. They wanted a voice in a government that would safeguard their simple right to live. As their own general said, they were a rude mob. They gloried in that fact, and their belief was miraculously hinged to a universal truth: that all men are created equal. Drawing strength from this truth, they got at least a part of their extraordinary demands. More than that, they awakened a national consciousness in which their cause echoes to this day; they played out the difficult idea of liberty for the whole world to see and remember.

So persistent is the tendency of men to simplify, to let one thing stand for many, that most of us take the date July 4, 1776, as the epitome of the Revolution. We forget the long years when not one man in ten thousand dreamed of separation from the mother country. We forget, too,

the long years between 1776 and 1800, the year of Thomas Jefferson's first election, which may be taken as the seal that confirmed the final victory of the Revolution.

Indeed, Sam Adams once fixed 1767 as the year when the Revolution began, although he was one of the few in America who at that time had hitched their thoughts to a star of independence. Time after time during those years Adams and others like him in all of the colonies had to hold back the people from violence, or to spur on the fainthearted—to hold the balance until the time was ripe. And ripeness consisted then as now in unity of sentiment. Until the great majority of the people not only were dissatisfied but were profoundly stirred by the vision of liberty, the wise men who created our nation were not ready to act. Thus, when they did act, the people had begun to be a nation in fact, prepared to endure the rigors of a bitter nine-year war and the sometimes worse rigors of construction that preceded the election of Jefferson.

Only in fairly recent years have we re-learned fully a fact that the Founding Fathers knew instinctively: that public opinion rules when the people rule. One major reason our forefathers were successful is that they were masters at understanding and riding upon the winds of opinion. Their burning words had more to do with creating a nation than did guns and powder.

Let us listen to the conclusion of *Common Sense*:

"O ye that love mankind; ye that dare oppose, not only the tyranny, but the tyrant, stand forth; every spot of the old world is overrun with oppression. Freedom hath been hunted round the globe. . . . O receive the fugitive! and prepare, in time, an asylum for mankind."

Paine says of *Common Sense*, "I gave the copy-right to

every State in the Union and the demand ran to not less than one hundred thousand copies." When it is considered that the population of the colonies was around 3,000,000, such dissemination is staggering. If the wider literacy of today is allowed for, a comparable edition now would easily run to 5,000,000 copies. *Common Sense* was a best-seller of best-sellers.

The end of the fighting was far from the end of division and hesitation even among some of the men who made the Revolution. As late as 1790, it was necessary for Samuel Adams to give his kinsman, John Adams, then Vice-President, a homely lesson in the rockbottom necessity of reliance without equivocation, upon the people. John had questioned in his letter some of the republican doctrines. To his worrying of word and theory Samuel was impelled to reply:

"A republic, you tell me, is a government in which 'the people have an essential *share* in the sovereignty.' Is not the *whole* sovereignty, my friend, essentially in the people? Is not government designed for the welfare and happiness of all the people, and is it not the uncontrollable essential right of the people to amend and alter or annul their Constitution, and frame a new one, whenever they shall think it will better promote their own welfare and happiness to do it? That the sovereignty resides in the people, is a political doctrine which I have never heard an American politician seriously deny. The Constitutions of American States reserve to the people their exercise of the rights of sovereignty. . . . *We the people*, is the style of the Federal Constitution: they adopted it; and, conformable to it, they delegate the exercise of the powers of government to particular persons, who after short inter-

vals, resign their powers to the people; and they will reelect them, or appoint others, as they think fit."

The paramount importance, in the minds of the leaders of the people's cause, of general consent in troublous times, is reflected in a letter Jefferson wrote Samuel Adams in the same month of the former's inauguration in 1801: "The storm is over, and we are in port. The ship was not rigged for the service she was put on. She will show the smoothness of her motions on her republican tack. I hope we shall once more see harmony restored among our citizens, and an entire oblivion of past feuds. Some of the leaders, who have most committed themselves, cannot come into this. I hope the great body of our fellow citizens will do it. I will sacrifice everything but principle to procure it."

It may be said that only through the triumph of the original spirit of the Revolution, as embodied in these words of Samuel Adams and Jefferson, was it possible for the states to be welded into a permanent union; for a settlement on any other basis would have been obnoxious to "the great body of our fellow citizens." They had fed on the meat of Thomas Paine too long to be willing to accept any perversion of their victory.

In the Civil War, civilian strength and conviction again played a mighty role. In the first two years of that war, years of unending military defeat for the Union, there was public apathy toward the war in the North. At the same time there burned in the South a spirit well-nigh universal, only recently described as "the conviction of every farmer, among what was essentially only a band of farmers, that nothing living could cross him and get away with it." In the last two years, when at last the cause of the



Union imbedded itself in the hearts of all the loyal citizens, there was a far different story to tell. Poor generalship had been only a major symptom of the underlying lack of unity in purpose and ideals.

Not until a feeling of personal commitment fired the rank and file of the people was it possible for the Union to summon the leaders and the arms and manpower necessary for victory. In the end, when the rugged farmers and mechanics saw the fight as one to insure the integrity of all individuals, the issue was decided. And it is notable that had the North, in its confusion of motives, been able to rise early enough to this truth, the far-seeing plans of Abraham Lincoln for "peace without victory" would have been realized. His concern for loyalist Southerners during the war, and his repeated insistence that the South had never left the Union, pointed the way for an economic as well as military peace. The failure of such a peace has exacted such heavy toll that seventy-five years afterward, the President has been able to describe the South as "the Nation's Economic Problem Number 1."

In the World War the bulk of American soldiers unquestioningly fought for democracy—for those same ideas, broadened by time, which the great advocates of the people, Jefferson and Lincoln, saw so clearly. There were a few who felt that the common democratic instinct was being used too much for largely chimerical ends. Yet at the bottom even these people believed with the millions that America had something to fight for, and die for if need be—a fundamental love of democracy and an ingrained intolerance of tyranny. So together, shoulder to shoulder, we marched and fought "to make the world safe for democracy."

America felt itself as one. In the crisis the many believed, stepped forward, and had the final word. The united sacrifice of all—Liberty Bonds and wheatless-meatless days, Plattsburg, the Fighting Sixty-Ninth, death in the Argonne—brought to victorious end, for a short while, the agelong struggle for human freedom. Without the almost unanimous response evoked by that idea, the nation could never have made the gigantic effort it did make.

*What Happened in Mt. Gilead, Ohio*

A similar feeling, together with a desire to do something themselves, is particularly prevalent now among people on the farms and in the rural villages. This is not the kind of thing that can be proved statistically, yet there does not seem to be much doubt about it. And one instance conveys better than an accumulation just what this spirit is. It happened in Mt. Gilead and in the rest of Morrow County, Ohio, when a young newspaper editor who had the idea that the people back home ought to do the war job, went back to Mt. Gilead and said so. His own words may be used to show what happened at a mass meeting when he told them it was their job to do:

"The people of Morrow County lost no time. There was spontaneous response from the floor.

"Up rose a farmer from Washington township: 'Up on our place this year we'll grow spuds enough to feed 10,000 soldiers for a year, at three bushels per man. But we've got to get spray materials, and labor, or we can't deliver the goods. This . . . idea sounds like a good way to get the whole county busy breaking bottlenecks.'

"President of the union local: 'Our guys, some of them,

are driving 25 and 30 miles to work. We're going to be running out of tires. Maybe this . . . will be what we need to get the whole county helping us work out a car-pooling plan, or some bus lines, so we can get to work to build the presses that have got to build the bombers for General MacArthur.'

"A vocational agriculture teacher: 'We've got about three times as much machine power on our farms in this country as we'd need if it were all used efficiently. This year we're going to be short of hands. We'll have to make those machines do more work. . . . We need to take a census of the tractors, combines, cornpickers, and such. We could spot them on a big county map, and a man in Washington township wouldn't have to chase all the way to South Bloomfield to get his beans out, if he found there was a combine for hire right down the road.'

"A housewife: 'Why not get the papers to print low-cost menus worked out by different ladies in the county, so our men and children can get the most strength at the least cost? And why couldn't the women who live in town go out and help farm wives with the housework while the farm women are helping out in the fields? And is there any reason why we women couldn't catalogue all the available rooms for refugees in the county in case of bombing attacks on the coasts?'

"And so it went. Out of their own concern over the dreadful fact of war, the people of that place had been searching for ways to help, facing problems that could be solved right there where they live."

The nation spread out beyond the meeting into the town, out of the town into the county. "Ideas flowed so freely, and enthusiasm ran so high, that the group decided

to call a Sunday afternoon mass meeting in the Mt. Gilead Opera House. Preachers announced it from their pulpits; a nearby radio station contributed spot announcements; school principals broadcast it to pupils; a 'Paul Revere' crew of women manned telephones and summoned farmers.

On strips of wallpaper, high-school girls painted slogans and signs, with which the Opera House was festooned. Local 1319 of the Machinists Union—the county's only labor union, which in this enterprise was for the first time accepted as part of the community—held a meeting . . . to talk over what they could do to help. The Columbus newspapers began to show an interest in what was going on in Mt. Gilead. A photographer appeared to take pictures of the people mobilizing for war. . . ."

The "Sunday afternoon mass meeting" was a great success, and the idea marched on. "In Morrow County, Ohio, a visitor will now see a county operating on an all-out war basis."

### *The Citizen Who Farms for a Living*

This was what happened in one rural community. The other instances cited in this book will be largely in terms of farmers and farming matters. Yet the essentials apply to all people everywhere. Almost any points that are made about rural people in this book could be translated into other terms and made to mean the same thing for other groups. For farmers and other people are much more alike than they are unlike.

But suppose, for the next few pages, we do not consider the American farmer as a farmer. He has moved far away from the self-sufficiency that was accepted as a matter of course a century ago. He wants to sleep on an inner-spring

mattress; his wife wants to wear store clothes when she goes to church. He wants biologicals for his cattle, an electric pump or a windmill pump to draw water, a radio, a car, a tractor. In countless ways he is tied into the web of industry and commerce.

The long culminating pressures on agriculture have drastically hardened the farmer's outlook. His working knowledge of the political economy has sharpened. A lateral and horizontal division of interest within his ranks has been growing steadily. The differences separating the booted from the dirt farmer have not been reconciled. The last two decades have reinforced the farmer's dependence on the expert, who has given him hybrid corn, rubber-tired tractors and skilled reports on freight rate differentials, agricultural credit corporations, farm taxes, and grazing lands in the national forests. Even Department of Agriculture reports speak of "the agricultural industry."

But look at the farmer's face, watch the man at work. He is, say, a Yankee from Vermont, from around Bradford. When he talks, the words come whistling out from behind his pointed nose, and his speech hops a little. Yet he is a man who has endured many winters. On his face are graven the marks of it. He is independent to the point of exasperation. In his bearing is the watchful quiet, the ear for truth and the measured acceptance of those who have endured.

Or it may be he is a Texan, a man who raises white-faced steers on a ranch containing 2000 sparse acres in the empty Pecos country. He is thin, like the man from Vermont, taller, bigger of bone, more leathery of skin. He drawls when he talks, but his speech is similarly reluctant, noncommittal. The hands of the two men are the same. They are overly large, cracked into white lines at the

knuckles, hard from ceaseless dealing with hard objects. The whole bearing of the Texan is likewise quiet, watchful, tightlipped. He, too, has endured.

Then there is the sharecropper from the little hills of eastern Mississippi. He, too, is on the lean side, so lean that the muscles in his skinny forearm stick out as taut as fiddle strings. When he talks, like the men from Vermont and Texas, he eases down into a squat, or leans back against the wall, one foot on the second step. He is tired, his mouth is lipless, there may be stubble on his chin even on Sundays. But see how quietly he stands in the gray of the morning, his arms loosely dangling against his scrawny thighs. He looks over his ten acres of cotton, glistening and dotted with little ghostly blurs of white. He looks and endures wordlessly.

There is a bony sameness to all farmers, good ones and bad ones, dirt farmers and booted farmers—a gaunt, silent completeness. This outward likeness is the reflection of an inner likeness conditioned by a common bond with the earth. They have the same life rhythms, deliberate organic rhythms in action and correspondingly in thought.

For the farmer is occupied mainly with tending cycles of growth, with nurturing living things. It is amazing how seldom the non-farmer gives full weight to this irreducible fact. Financing his production, bringing his goods to market, and dickering for a price drive home to the farmer his vital connection with the hierarchized urban sphere, and so with the world at large. But these outward excursions, crucial to his welfare as they are, absorbing though they may be in leisure argument and in intervals of rebellion, in fact make only small demands on the farmer's time.

Living things, the non-farmer does not completely real-

ize, once started on their course are not readily tampered with. For the sake of rhetoric it is clever to think of a dairy herd as a machine. Nevertheless, at five o'clock on a bitter winter morning the Upper New York State dairyman knows only too well that his herd of thirty cows is an aggregate of that many individual beasts with obstinately variable characteristics. Plantings, all farmers know, whether they raise beets in Colorado, hops in Oregon, winter lettuce in Florida, or truck on the Jersey flat, cannot be altered in midseason, or shut down until prices go up.

It is the farmer's business to keep his eyes close to home, close to the earth. Only with straining, experience has taught him, can his modes be translated into opportunist channels. He has little occasion to become skilled in handling men at several removes. Working the fields and caring for animals make for serenity and completeness in his character. Likewise his occupation blunts his response to tension in mass relationships. Even if he is a farmer-businessman, or a farmer-industrialist, to the extent that he is bound by the seasons, by the planting, growing and harvesting of his crops, the rhythms of the earth mark his whole thinking.

The agrarian way of life is a rich mine of strength now. Of all the groups in our society, farmers come nearest to being "free and equal." By so doing, they live out the democratic ideas for which we are fighting.

### *The Farmer Citizen and the Waging of the War*

But regardless of their special virtues or unusual vices, farmers, like wage-earners and businessmen, white-collar workers and professional men, face a tremendous job in bearing their part of the burden of a successful war. Even

before the nation was attacked, American farmers were workers in the arsenal of democracy. As the shadow of aggression crept across the maps, the load they were called upon to shoulder became increasingly heavy.

Farmers, in brief, must physically energize the war effort. It is they who must produce an abundance of food to ensure stamina for three shifts at furnace and lathe and for our campaigns across the sea. Beyond this, they must furnish vast quantities of food for our allies in accordance with lease-lend commitments that have already involved two and a quarter billion dollars. The country is calling on American agriculture for the largest production ever known.

This physical problem, as it so happens, is not so bad as might be expected. There are strains, dislocations, and shortages of both labor and machinery. But, discounting the pressure of the effort, these abnormal demands are more likely to work toward a desirable physical balance in American agriculture than otherwise. It would be unwise to make quick comparison between this war and the first World War. Then the basic need was for small grains. In this war vegetable fats and oils, pork, poultry, eggs, highly nutritious concentrates, and dairy products are wanted both at home and abroad. These are products of which there is usually a shortage in normal times, and much of the increase will be all to the good, not only now, but carried over into peace.

For many years it has been clear that a shift into some of these products from the staple exports of the past—cotton and wheat, notably—would be desirable, but it has not been possible to move rapidly in that direction. Not only from the standpoint of the nutrition of our people but from that of a balanced agriculture, founded on the best



use of land and of diversification of income sources, did such a shift seem indicated. Under the pressure of war we are moving faster.

Against the difficulty of the job to be done, however, it should be emphasized that the American farmer is in a better tactical position to hold his own within a disjointed wartime economy than ever in history. This is tremendously important, not only for the farmer's sake, but for the good of the nation. The assurance of plenty in food-stuffs is a most concrete deterrent of price inflation. In any case, throughout the past twenty years, and particularly since 1933, a complex succession of farm legislation has paved the way for deep changes in the whole structure of production. Above all, for the long pull, this legislation has reversed the process of exhaustion of soil reserves. The American land is in far better shape to meet the challenge of war than at any time in the past three decades. A credit system has been designed to meet the commercial farmer's need for money at a reasonable cost. Production and marketing controls have been established to help balance farm and urban income. While in peacetime these controls were used principally to level off the supply of and demand for corn, wheat, tobacco, rice, and cotton, with equal facility government action can be used to promote needed increases of other products. The machinery for control already has been put to work both to increase the production of some commodities and to decrease the production of others. And in scores of other ways—credit, marketing, availability of electrical power and technology generally—agriculture is in better position than ever before.

Here it is unnecessary to catalogue the numerous gov-

ernmental mechanisms that have helped to bring this about. What is pertinent is that these mechanisms were set up because agriculture had become increasingly at a disadvantage in an industrial economy, in part because of the very virtues of the farming way of life that have just been mentioned. Six million independent producers could not organize in their own behalf and act in concert like a labor union or a business trade association. Yet they had to have means for such action or continue to suffer.

In this situation action by government to afford all farmers the avenues for action was imperative. Yet both the proponents and the opponents of such governmental action were worried. How could such a tremendous undertaking be carried through without setting up an intolerable bureaucracy, intolerable both in number and in size of the interest that ultimately would become vested in its continuance? The answer has been in an array of governmental or semi-governmental devices, all of them designed to bring the citizen—in this instance, the farmer—into the making of the giant governmental programs that the times made necessary, and into their administration and operation as well.

In these first steps toward making the vast governmental structure of today as real and vital to the citizen as the New England town meeting used to be, in fighting for what Henry A. Wallace calls economic democracy, the right of all men to share in the making of the decisions that affect their economic welfare, the farmer himself has been deliberately drawn into the process.

This fact has many implications for the future of our democracy. It is the key that will open many locks; it may give us the clue to some of the riddles that have made us

scratch our heads hardest. One of the dilemmas of democracy is that already alluded to: How to deal with the giant complexities of modern economy without overcentralization of power? A way must be found to make modern government, in some sense, of the same virtue as the town meeting. This means, too, that government must find ways at once of handling national problems on a national scale, and of making its action on such problems flexible enough to fit local exigencies. Another such dilemma is posed by the wide separation between the layman and the specialist. The scientist has no ivory towers any more, and the layman finds no refuge from bombs on idyllic South Sea islands. And more and more they need each other. The scientist needs the practical expertness of the citizen, and the layman needs the special knowledge of the technician. Agriculture has gone farther than other groups toward solution of some of these puzzles. These approaches need to be more widely known, studied, and used.

In effect, this book is a discussion of a decade of government efforts, dictated by the very nature of the difficulties of 1932-33, to grapple for the first time on any big scale with some of the major problems of democracy. And it is an attempt to show how the painfully learned lessons of those years may enable democracy to meet the challenge of the present and of the future that is growing out of the present even while we look on.

The names of the devices adopted or invented in these years are not exciting. Few of the experiments that government has been forced to make follow orthodox theory, or conform to the dialectics of philosopher or economist. They were evolved in the heat of a struggle to deal with specific and very actual problems. But for that very rea-

son, they contain the germs of the future, of an American future, based on the efforts of Americans to meet American needs. The people should preserve them, use them, whenever and wherever they can be used, even in wartime.

For so, too, have these struggles yielded hard-won lessons for us in the conduct of the war. What we have learned in the battle to wrest order from the chaos of the great crash of 1929 can be applied on a greater scale in the present tremendous battle to bring world order from the world chaos that at last has given the challenge direct to our own democracy.

## Agriculture's War Job and War Tools

"And then in 1929 we had a pretty good crop, and after that until 1934 our crops tapered off. In 1930 we didn't get much, in 1931 we didn't get much, in 1932 we didn't get much, 1933 we didn't get much, and 1934—that, of course, took everything."—FREDERIC COOK, witness before the Tolan Committee.

Many people, perhaps, do not fully understand the part that American agriculture must play in winning the war. They know, of course, that the boys have been rolling off the farms to fight all over the world, just as they have been rolling out of factories and businesses and schools. And most people know that the farms of America must supply civilians and fighting men alike with food, with fiber for clothing, with leather for shoes. But agriculture's total share of the war effort means vastly more than that. The products of the farms are filling more needs than they have ever before been called upon to supply in war; what is more, in many ways farmers are facing their greatest difficulties in meeting these responsibilities.

In the first place, the farmers of the United States are called upon not only to feed our own people at home, and our own Army and Navy. The task is a great deal more than that. From the farms of America now must come much of the food to replace what the United Kingdom once drew from thrifty Denmark, from the Low Countries, from the no longer peaceful shores of the blue Medi-

terranean. Moreover, our agriculture now is trying to replace for Russia some of the foodstuffs that formerly flowed so abundantly from the fertile Ukraine.

Our farmers may well feel that they, too, have had a part in the courageous defense of Britain. They have had a share in that fight "on the beaches, landing grounds, in fields, in streets, and on the hills" that Winston Churchill promised the Germans, and that his countrymen are so gallantly waging. Without American food, it may be doubted if the British could have held out thus far. And our farmers will have an increasingly important role to play in the British effort and the Russian effort as the war goes on; they will have a big part in the world-wide battle of the United Nations as a whole, all over the world.

But it is not food alone that farmers are contributing to the waging of successful war on the greatest scale in history. From the farms of this country also are coming the basic materials for many of the military essentials of war. Corn and sugar yield industrial alcohol for explosives; soybeans and peanuts replace the vegetable oils of the Indies in a score of military uses; cotton is needed for gunpowder, flax gives the linseed for paint on our battleships, even the lowly gourd furnishes a fibrous sponge for marine engines. The list could be extended almost indefinitely.

### *War's Demands on American Agriculture*

Needless to say, these new demands have differed not only in size but in kind from the ordinary demands upon agriculture. Never before has the world or our country needed as many soybeans as it needs now. The lowly peanut—the "ground pea" of the South—has become an international hero, for peanuts produce more oil per acre

than any of our major crops. The requirements for milk and all of the varied products of the dairy—cheese, evaporated and condensed milk, butter, even milk powder—are far greater than ever before in history. The same is true of fruits and of such vegetables as tomatoes and peas for canning. Such formerly esoteric plants as tung trees have attained new importance. Guayule rubber, perhaps still unpronounceable for most of us, nevertheless has become familiar in print. We even found we needed more cotton of the longer lengths. In fact, the production goals that the Department of Agriculture asked farmers to aim at in 1942 called for the greatest agricultural production in our country's history. Farmers were asked to produce 125 billion pounds of milk, they were asked for a cattle slaughter that would reach 28 million head of cattle and calves, for about 4 billion dozen eggs, as well as a lot more chickens for meat, for the slaughter of 83 million head of hogs. Moreover, farmers in the spring of 1942 were asked to plant 3.4 million of acres to peanuts for oil and 9 million to soybeans for beans, and to plant up to their full acreage allotment of cotton, to help make up for the copra and vegetable oils lost when the Japanese seized control of the East Indies and Malaya.

Such astronomical figures as these are hard to see in terms of reality. We have trouble thinking about butter except as the pound we buy at the corner grocery. A golden mountain of butter, a tremendous pyramid of eggs, a river of milk—even these are pretty hard to think about literally. Perhaps it helps to visualize the magnitude of the task facing our farmers, however, if we think like this. In the five months that Corregidor held out against the Japanese, the 16-inch guns of the fortress day after day sent their great projectiles hurtling across Manila Bay,

each shell doing its part to slow down the Axis offensive, to cripple the aggressors to the point where we in turn could launch our attack. And every time one of those great guns was fired, the linters from 16 acres of cotton were used up in the war for freedom. And into the growing of those linters and the valuable seed and lint that came with them went long hours of plowing, of hoeing, of tilling, of harvesting. If you can imagine the hours of work under the hot sun or in the rain, just to get the cotton from those 16 acres, and multiply those 16 acres by the thousands and thousands of similar acres all over the country, then it does not seem a far cry at all from the unromantic peanuts, soybeans, cotton bolls, corn ears, to the fiery ordeal of battle on all the shores of all the oceans.

Or suppose you think about the farms of this country as a great assembly line. Then you can perhaps imagine 111,000 quarts of milk, on the average, pouring off that assembly line every minute of every day in the year. Or you can picture to yourself 95,000 eggs rolling out of this gigantic factory every minute; or 44,000 pounds of potatoes or 35,500 pounds of beef and veal. And so on, pretty much all along the line of agricultural production.

In March 1942, the Bureau of Agricultural Economics analyzed for the Secretary of Agriculture the progress that was being made toward meeting this tremendous assignment and reported that "farmers will meet or exceed their goals for most commodities." The Bureau said, "The Department of Agriculture has announced special measures to stimulate further increase in production . . . or to help farmers to overcome the obstacles to the attainment of production goals.

"For example, on March 1, farmers evidently intended to plant a million acres more of soybeans for oil than was



called for by the goals. It looked as though the goals would be reached or passed in all major producing areas. Nevertheless, many farmers indicated they were willing to make a still further increase in acreage if the need were great enough." The Bureau found that "plantings of peanuts for oil would be  $1\frac{1}{2}$  million acres short of the goal," but nevertheless, "the expected peanut acreage was two-thirds greater than last year, and it seems probable that provision of additional information on the needs and price supports may bring about a further increase." As a result, increased soybean production was asked of farmers.

"Discovering from the survey," the Bureau added, "that milk production was likely to be 5 billion pounds short of the goal if the current spread between feed and dairy prices continued, the Department on March 28 announced an increase of  $1\frac{3}{4}$  cents a pound in the floor under butter prices. This is expected to enable farmers to feed more grain and further increase their milk production, which is already 4 per cent greater than it was a year ago."

In view of the daily impact of war on all our lives, in price control, rationing, diets, the conclusion is heartening: "In general, farmers are set to break all production records this year. Their achievement promises to be remarkable in view of the fast-changing requirements of the war and the speed with which it was necessary to formulate National, State and local production goals and get out information about them."

### *Converting Farms for War*

All of these impacts of war upon agriculture meant a tremendous stress and strain. There was a problem of conversion on farms like that in industry. When the need for sending cheese to England became apparent, it was clear

that we had the milk from which to make the cheese. But we did not have enough cheese-processing plants, particularly of the types most needed. And there was no assurance that people could keep on buying all these cheeses after the war. When it came to increasing the acres planted to peanuts, there was the problem of getting pickers enough to harvest the added acreage. Priorities on metals were needed if new pickers were to be built. If the South did not let its hogs eat peanuts, as it had always done, where was the additional feed for the hogs to come from? Much of the great new acreage of soybeans was in the Middle West, but most of the plants which could crush the additional beans were in the South. The exodus of 100,000 Japanese from the West Coast left thousands of very productive truck farms for which new operators had to be found, at a time when manpower everywhere was being drained from the farms into industry or military life.

Such problems as these are the broad problems of agriculture in wartime. But each of these, and many more obstacles to achievement of full production, are always to be translated, at bottom, into difficulties for individual farmers. There is the Illinois corn-hog farmer whose two sons have gone off to war, the Carolina peanut-grower who, without a machine picker, had to harvest a bigger crop than last year. There are the truck farmers of the Eastern States who could no longer get freely the gasoline and tires they needed to haul their produce to market. Everywhere there were problems of going without some fertilizers and using new ones, problems for farm women of using all their ingenuity in canning and preserving under difficulties, of a multiplied complex host of besetting difficulties, small and large, forced by war conditions.

It is a tribute to the traditional resourcefulness of American farmers that they are meeting the biggest challenge to produce that they have ever had. More than that, it shows that democracy is right when it relies on that resourcefulness, when it gives the average citizen a big responsibility. For in the last analysis, farm production far more than factory production must hang upon the skill, loyalty, and industry of citizens working pretty much on their own. They cannot become the objects of a solicitous paternalism so easily as other groups.

These are simply a few random instances to show the adjustments that war is involving for agriculture. There are many others. American agriculture probably will never return to the pattern it had before the war. But this is far from being an unmitigated evil. Indeed, some of the shifts in types of farming, in regional balance, in diversification, that are being forced by the war are simply accelerations of desirable trends or are changes that had been urged by students of agricultural problems for many years.

Facing the gigantic task outlined in the preceding pages, facing new and larger handicaps than ever before in doing this job, American agriculture as of Pearl Harbor nevertheless was better equipped than at any time in history to carry out its wartime assignment. To those who have spent the better part of their lives in work related to farming, the contrast between the condition of our national farm plant now and a decade ago is so great as to force the use of superlatives in the effort to describe it.

### *Agriculture's Weapons of Victory*

In 1933, we came to the end of *laissez-faire*, or more accurately, of the "leave-'er-lay" method of solving agri-

cultural difficulties. This consisted in giving farmers all possible information about what it would be desirable for them to do if they could, and then hoping that it would be possible for them to do it. In practice, of course, it was wholly out of the question for many of them to follow the advice that was so ably prepared and freely offered. It was useless to tell a farmer how to practice soil conservation if he could not pay for it, useless to tell farm women how to use pressure cookers if they could not afford one.

That phase ended in the crashing prices, crashing banks, and crashing hopes of the great depression. In the years since, farmers and government, working together, have evolved mechanisms that on the whole have worked well. They can be criticized for this and for that, but in the main they have come to be regarded as indispensable in one form or another. Their end product has been a tremendous gain in every aspect of American agriculture, both as a way of making a living and as a way of life. As the nation enters into deepening phases of the war, it is fortunate indeed that it is so well equipped. The nation needs these mechanisms.

In the first place, farm people are better off than they were before. The sons of farmers are more fit, both for military and for civil life, than they would have been without these great programs, and farm families themselves are better citizens and better producers because of them. In the second place, the land itself, the other of the basic elements in farm production, is in far better shape than it was a decade ago. Ten years of consistent promotion of soil-conserving crops, of plowing on the contour, of crop rotation, have produced astonishing results. The wheat yield in 1941 was the highest in history, 16.9 bushels per acre

for the whole country. The corn yield, abetted by increasing use of hybrid corn as well as counter-erosion measures, stood at almost the highest level in history, 31 bushels per acre. For each of the five years, 1937 through 1941, cotton yields were above 235 pounds to the acre, whereas only in thirteen years before had they surpassed 200 pounds. Preliminary figures indicate some still higher crop and yield totals in 1942. Erosion has not been halted wholly, but its progress has been retarded. In the Dust Bowl man is winning with incredible speed a fight that seemed well-nigh hopeless when it started. And in a score of other ways, farm life and business have been helped. Credit is easier for the fairly well-off farmer to get, and is for the first time accessible to many of the poorer farmers. Electricity has been brought to new thousands of farms. The marketing system is slowly being improved. The list could be extended, but it is not the purpose here to enter into detailed endorsement of agricultural programs.

A major point to be remembered about these programs, at least so far as the argument of this book is concerned, is that they give the nation a means for drawing rapidly and wholeheartedly into the wartime service of democracy the great mass of rural citizens. The agencies that carry out these programs reach into every county and most rural communities. They have given farmer citizens exercises in the practice of democracy, of day-to-day living with government, that can be invaluable as we gird ourselves for our greatest national effort.

Conversely, they have their dangers, dangers of bureaucracy and indeed of something worse. They must be used in the way they were intended to be used or the great blessings they represent can be converted into even greater

curses. Let us look at some of these programs—where they came from, how they work—as a basis for the discussion of some of the values and actions that they will involve.

During the lull between two wars there was a remarkable coalescence of governmental and private interest in agriculture. The agricultural developments which gestated in the twenties and saw light in the next decade are a profoundly important phase in the little man's struggle for privilege all over the world. This struggle, among nations and within nations, has become more nearly universal each year. Currently the forces involved are mutually repellent on the grandest possible scale. Even such neutral members of the human race as the Andaman Islanders and the Eskimos of Greenland are caught up in the planetary turmoil.

The American process has run pretty much true to form. During the twenties, the government drifted along, in a spirit of nonfeasance, not doing many of the things that ought to have been done and generally allowing this or that private interest to have its way. Government inclined to function either in the capacity of policeman, technical pamphleteer, or as a body affirming legal precept for all manner of privilege. The activities of making, selling, and buying goods and services were left to regulate themselves.

Governmental inertia became exquisitely organized. Nonfeasance, of course, is always a question of degree, of how much nonfeasance is disciplined or allowed to flourish. When buck-passing, purposely submitting to red tape, refusing to take a responsibility which others have refused to assign, exchanging memos which will never be read, and framing resolutions that will never leave the committee, conferring endlessly over points of jargon, making

cabal at the luncheon table—when all these paralyzing evasions hold sway, then there is no mandate for dynamic government action. This is about what happened in the twenties, a decade that seems, as we look back amid war, as simply a part of the truce between two gigantic battles.

It is no simple matter for a rural population to force action on its behalf, and it is particularly hard in the United States. It was possible in the decade of the thirties because farm people, for one thing, had endured ten years more of acute stress and strain than the rest of the population. By the time the crash came, the crash which was a function of a world-wide failure of economic mechanisms, the scoffers at agricultural legislation were already softened up. Already the old symbols of conduct had started to crumble, and the old reticence and patience.

### *The Long Years of Agrarian Struggle*

But the twenties and early thirties were only one episode in the long history of struggle by farm people increasingly disadvantaged in a business-industrial economy, to balance the scales that were weighted against them.

The long struggle during the early decades of our country's existence between the advocates and opponents of internal improvements, the boldness with which Thomas Jefferson seized his chance to acquire New Orleans as the all-important agricultural outlet of the young republic, even the long struggle to reduce or eliminate tariffs in an effort to maintain this country as an agricultural country—all of these were different facets of governmental assistance to agriculture usually designed to rectify what farmers regarded as economic inequalities.

But more important than all other political activity to

assist farmers was the Federal land policy, which reached something of a culmination in the Homestead Act of 1862. There were, of course, accompaniments of error and misdeed in our land policy. There were the Yazoo Frauds, with the bitter fate of the Indians, with the lavish land gifts to railroad companies. There was the wasteful exploitation that accompanied the westward surges of people. There was grave error in the Homestead laws themselves in restricting settlers to small acreages in regions where thousands of acres are required for a livelihood in this day. When all this catalogue of tragedy and error is completed, however, the great fact of explosively energetic settlement and civilization remains. It will not profit us now to cry over the spilt milk of land policy, or to praise it unreservedly as "the American way" or any other way. For good or ill, our land policies in the past have been the response of government to an overwhelming demand of the people for land, for cheap land, for free land.

Still another instance of response by government to popular desire was the establishment of the Department of Agriculture. In his announcement to Congress of the Department, Lincoln said: "The Commission (of Agriculture) informs me that within the period of a few months this Department has established an extensive system of correspondence and exchanges, both at home and abroad, which promises to effect highly beneficial results in the development of a correct knowledge of recent improvements in agriculture, in the introduction of new products, and in the collection of the agricultural statistics of the different States. Also, that it will soon be prepared to distribute largely seeds, cereals, plants, and cuttings, and has already published and liberally diffused much valuable



information in anticipation of a more elaborate report, which will in due time be furnished, embracing some valuable tests in chemical science now in progress in the laboratory."

Thus, the Department was designed to comply with an insistent call for collection and diffusion of information, and for physical and economic research. This insistence on the part of agriculture likewise was reflected in the Morrill Act providing for grants of land to the States for the establishment of agricultural colleges, grants that later were supplemented by cash aids in the second Morrill Act (1890) and the Nelson Act (1907). It was reflected, too, in the Hatch Act of 1887 providing Federal funds for the first national system of agricultural experiment stations in the world. There followed a steady growth of this system of grant-in-aid and an extension of work by the Department of Agriculture, on the one hand, and by the Land-Grant Colleges, on the other, in economic and physical research and in making available to farmers the results of their findings. The culmination of this twin growth came in 1914 with the adoption of the Smith-Lever Act and the founding of the Extension Service. Those 25 years have seen the county agent of the Extension Service become a symbol of the relationship between agriculture and government. Paid usually by joint Federal, state, and local funds, the county agent is unique. Originally, the man who was to bring science to the farmer's doorstep, he has evolved in late years as agricultural programs have evolved, and performs a many-sided function. He is proving a bulwark of our national war effort, just as he has proved invaluable in peace.

The Smith-Lever Act was still another departure in

government's attempts to meet the demands of farm people. Where before the people had sought merely to get from government the facilities for research and education, now they had demanded and obtained aggressive steps by government to bring the fruits of research to the people. These steps were a tacit admission that the assistance of the Federal Government was required in meeting the demands of the people. The state governments alone could not meet those demands; if they were to do so, they required the support of the national government. The Smith-Lever Act embodied that view. It also embodied another theory: If the masses of the people are to be able to take advantage of the advances of research and action, then the people must have a government that will act to bring this knowledge to the rank and file. Here, again, the people may well give thanks that they have at hand in time of national crisis the instruments that this response of democracy afforded.

From 1862 to 1914, however, is a long jump, especially in the history of a people so volatile and optimistically insatiable as ours. The half-century after the Civil War gave birth to the modern restlessness of farm people, an intellectual as well as physical ferment, that coined the terms "agrarian discontent," "farm revolt," and the other phrases that have persisted down to our day until, as someone has said, the plight of the farmer threatened to rival the weather conversationally both in popularity and dullness. This was the time when the Grangers called upon government to end the abuses of the railroads, when the Farmers Alliance swept the West and South with its demand for government backing for farmers' cooperatives and for new credit facilities to combat the rising costliness of farmland. These were the days, too, of the Popu-

lists and of William Jennings Bryan's rallying cry for government assistance to force a price and monetary structure more favorable to farmers.

At bottom, this meant a radical shift from the earlier conception of the role of government. For these appeals were for direct government help to give the farmer a secure and satisfactory level of living. He did not get such a living, and in the confusion and prosperity of war days and post-war booms, the cry of the farmer at first was softened by temporary high prices, then concealed in the general glow of an industrial prosperity stimulated by an unhealthy loan-induced foreign trade. That breathing spell was a delusion to those who thought that government no longer had to bother with the economic welfare of the farmer. Our whole economy had developed threatening fissures under a thin surface coating of prosperity, and when those cracks began widening in the twenties and thirties, the appeals of an outraged agriculture became more vocal than ever before. The cry was always for help from the national government, regardless of finespun theories about the role of government.

Such theories long since had been disregarded in the case of credit. It had been rather generally acknowledged for many years that insofar as credit was afforded by governmental agencies, the furnishing of that credit was almost exclusively a function of the national government. But in the twenties, the various equalization fee and export debenture plans, and the Federal Farm Board, among other schemes, were brought forward, all of them calling for the exercise of the national government's power to improve the relative economic position of agriculture.

As the great depression, which proved both the after-

math and prelude to war, deepened in the early thirties, this long agitation for governmental assumption of responsibility reached a climax. With the change to the Roosevelt Administration, the Agricultural Adjustment Administration was set up to raise the level of farm income. The Soil Conservation Service arose in response to the demand for government assistance in solving an erosion problem that long since had gone beyond the ability of individuals to cope with. Purchase of submarginal land by the national government was authorized in response to appeals for rebuilding an exploited public domain. The Farm Credit Administration, composed of several existing agencies, was established to meet the call for better credit facilities. The Rural Electrification Administration became the answer to the cry for cheaper farm electricity and government help in cooperative action to get it. The Farm Security Administration evolved as the medium for meeting the appeal for aid to the lower economic groups of farm people. The wheel had come full circle from the days when the pioneer farmer might be born, raised, and buried on a wilderness farm where he never saw a tax collector or an agent of the Federal Government, to our day when the individual farmer is more than aware of the relation of that government's activity to his own well-being.

### *The Instrument for Agricultural Adjustment*

Best known of all the devices of government with which we propose to win this war, so far as farmers and their hired men of government can help to win it, is the Agricultural Adjustment Agency (formerly the Agricultural Adjustment Administration), the agency which has touched immediately and frequently the lives of more

farmers than any other "action" agency in the government. The AAA is known in every nook and corner of the land. Like all of the other steps taken on behalf of farmers, the legislation creating AAA is simply the logical conclusion to a logical sequence. Almost every idea embodied in this law had been put forward, in one form or other, many years before. It is the accretion of many ideas of many men. And the problems it was designed to tackle were far from new. They were simply more of the accumulating trials of most farmers over many decades.

By 1929 things had grown pretty bad for farmers, the boom notwithstanding. The Agricultural Marketing Act of that year created the Federal Farm Board. As originally conceived, the purpose of the Farm Board was modest enough. The Department of Agriculture had always favored marketing cooperatives as a means of ensuring good merchandising and a fair price. The Farm Board was given a half-billion-dollar revolving fund to prime a cooperative movement by making commodity loans. At this point, Black Thursday came. Struggling to get its bearings amidst panic, the Farm Board of sheer public necessity turned to stabilizing prices by outright purchase of surpluses. The intention was to store them, and unload gradually when the crisis was past. Unfortunately the crisis was not transitory, and actually worsened. The Farm Board was crippled by mounting losses. The fund revolved—downward, in a dizzy spiral.

The Farm Board plan and predecessor agricultural plans paved the way for the first Agricultural Adjustment Act in 1933. In fact, some of the same men who figured largely in the domestic allotment proposal helped frame the first really monumental piece of so-called "action" legislation.

This Agricultural Adjustment Act approached directly the nub of a problem which the domestic allotment plan had skirted, namely, outright reduction of acreage devoted to crops of which there was commonly a surplus. In return for benefit payments on a variety of commodities—cotton, wheat, tobacco, corn, hogs, rice, sugar beets, and sugar cane—the farmer agreed to control his production. The program was financed by the proceeds from taxes levied on processors. In some cases farmers asked for marketing quotas to ensure cooperation. To this end the Bankhead Control Act was passed. This act heavily taxed the ginning of cotton, but gave tax-exemption warrants to farmers who cooperated in reducing their plantings. Similar methods were applied to tobacco by the Kerr-Smith Tobacco Control Act.

The AAA of 1933 was voided by Supreme Court action in its third year in a decision that held agriculture to be a local matter, drawing forth then-associate Justice Stone's caustic dissent regarding the "economic predilections" of the Court. As an aftermath of this decision came the Soil Conservation and Domestic Allotment Act of 1936, which in turn was the forerunner of a second Agricultural Adjustment Act of 1938. The Soil Conservation and Domestic Allotment Act of 1936 took pains to avoid difficulties encountered by the earlier act, partly through a conservation approach to production control. Voluntary agreement replaced the contractual features of the original scheme. In the larger sense, as it proved, this was an important step toward free, critical participation by farmers in the program. Benefits now took the form of payments conditional on soil-conservation practices (liming the fields, planting nitrogen-restoring legumes, limiting the

acreages of soil-depleting crops, etc.), and the processing taxes condemned in the Hoosac Mills decision were done away with. Henceforth, the program was to be financed by direct appropriation.

Yet it became apparent within a year that further implementation of this law was needed. And so came the second Agricultural Adjustment Act of 1938, a massive résumé of the best thought on agricultural problems. It was aimed at soil conservation, better farm management, and balanced national output. It provided for marketing quotas and parity payments, and governmental assistance in the diversion of surpluses into inadequately explored domestic and foreign channels. Through a system of loans on crop surpluses it provided for an "Ever-Normal Granary," and went so far as to provide for government crop insurance.

Through this act a great seal was placed on active government support of agriculture. Adjustment was to be subsidized by direct appropriations, these subject to the will and common sense of the American public. Those whose perspective includes the condition of American agriculture at the time the first Agricultural Adjustment Act was adopted, join in gratitude that, as the threatening clouds of world-wide war finally broke over our country, farmers had ready to hand an instrument that enabled them to meet the responsibilities that this war has brought to them. It is a far cry from the days of shotgun auctions of farmland to today when government and farmer citizens in effective partnership are trying to save for all men the way of life that has made possible such a partnership. We badly need that partnership now, and its free operation should be utilized to the fullest extent in helping to win the war.

It is to be hoped, too, that this principle of bringing citizens into the processes of government will grow and grow. Let us consider statistically some of the things this adjustment agency and the law under which it operates meant to farmers in the one year 1941.

Through the hands of the 7000-odd AAA employees, a medium-sized group within the whole body of more than 82,000 workers on the Department of Agriculture payroll, passed well above \$700,000,000 of the 1.3 billion-dollar Federal investment in agriculture. A part went for conservation payments, a part for parity payments, for county association expenses, payments for the purchase and diversion of commodities, and for administrative expenses, this last item accounting for about 2.1 per cent of the whole. In declining order, benefits were placed in the hands of farmers in the north central region or corn belt, the southern region, the western region, the east central region, and the northeast region of the United States.

More than half a million wheat growers in 40 states voted on the wheat marketing quotas, and more than 900,000 cotton farmers voted in the similar cotton referendum. Through the Commodity Credit Corporation between December 1, 1940, and August 9, 1941, farmers got more than 109,000 loans totaling \$62,550,000 on better than 100,000,000 bushels of corn. Similar loans were made on more than 3,000,000 bales of cotton before even half the year was over. Crop insurance was extended from wheat to cotton, with insurance on other crops in prospect as soon as a sound actuarial basis for extensions of the service could be worked out. In the conservation program of the AAA more than 6,000,000 payments were recorded, on acres accounting for 80 per cent of the total American



cropland. The statistics are pretty nearly endless. They sum up to this: In 1941 government payments to agriculture amounted to about 5 per cent of the 11.7 billion-dollar farm income.

### *The Instrument for Easier Credit*

So much then for the web that has been spun in dealing with the agricultural surplus. Next let us observe farm credit as farmers look ahead and begin planning for their second year of production for wartime. The Federal land bank system was a compromise answer to the problem of giving the farmer money at a reasonable cost to make possible his seasonally determined operations. Serious discussions got under way with Theodore Roosevelt's Country Life Commission in 1908. They continued through an annual succession of farm credit investigating committees and reports on foreign credit systems. Party platforms had long carried farm credit planks. The culmination of this pre-World War growth in understanding of the problem was the Federal Farm Loan Act of 1916. These bills did not receive approval until an immense potpourri of ideas had been aired in Congress. In the 63d Congress alone, 32 bills and resolutions were introduced in the Senate, and 78 in the House.

The idea of the Federal land bank system was to provide cheap long-term credit. The government subscribed the original capital, \$750,000 for each of the twelve banks. This pleased those who felt that only Federally backed banking could meet agriculture's peculiarly difficult needs. At the same time loans were made and serviced to individuals through the national farm loan associations. The associations, for their corporate part, had to buy stock in

the land banks, which would automatically lead to the retirement of the Federal investment, leaving the government to pursue a supervisory role. This satisfied the individualists, the ones who feared too much government. Also, in order to get a loan a borrower was required to buy into the farm loan association to the tune of 5 per cent of the credit advanced. In theory, at least, this gave him a voice in the management of the association and, at one remove, in the management of the land bank itself. This pleased the cooperativists of the period.

During this early period, as today, the bulk of Federal land bank activity was refinancing existing debt. By 1929 delinquencies on these cautiously figured land bank loans stood at an uneasy 6 per cent. Three years later they had jumped to 45 per cent. Farm paper had fallen radically in values, and private institutions were trying to unload. Farmers were openly threatening foreclosure auctioneers with bodily violence, and a moratorium had to be declared. The lack of confidence, the bewilderment, and the brute distress among farmers were appalling. The possibilities of national disunity inherent in such a situation are even more appalling if one considers them in the light of wartime need for harmony that developed a decade later.

Credit relief, when it finally came in the thirties, was organized on three levels. There were grants, supervised character loans, and loans made essentially on a business basis. The grants and character loans more properly can be considered part of the rehabilitation program organized by the Resettlement Administration and inherited by the Farm Security Administration. The business type loans, either for refinancing outmoded indebtedness or for supporting current production, were to be disbursed through

an impressive extension of the Federal land bank system. The first move to bring order into the national credit picture was the establishment of a Farm Credit Administration coinciding geographically with the Federal land bank system. New capital was pumped into the land banks, and a Federal Farm Mortgage Corporation capitalized and empowered to float bond issues. An intensive refinancing program was launched, and 2700 debt-adjustment committees of private composition set up. In the first year and a half alone, a billion and a half mortgages were taken over by the new FCA.

For short-term credit a cooperative production credit system was set up. In each of twelve districts a Production Credit Corporation was established, which in turn organized, financed, and supervised local production credit associations. The small associations make loans for any agricultural purpose entailing only collateral in the form of chattels. Loans run from a month to a year. In addition, in each of the twelve regions a Bank for Cooperatives was formed. These banks supply credit for local cooperatives, loans for operating capital and facilities, and commodity loans. In Washington, a Central Bank for Cooperatives was set up, and authorized to make loans to large cooperatives. Cooperatives and production associations in the system were given access to the money markets through the Federal Intermediate Credit Banks. Moreover, increased appropriations were made for emergency crop and feed loans secured by a first lien on crops. These emergency loans had been in effect off and on since 1921, but were now made continuously available.

The Farm Credit Administration has many functions beyond the routine business of making loans. It is a powerful instrument of the Department of Agriculture's stabili-

zation policy, and has convinced most farmers that their borrowing to be effective must be keyed not to the shifting market value of collateral, but to the earning power of their property. In this respect the agency's work has lately been tested by a recent jump in national income through war expenditures. From the beginning of 1941 to the early months of 1942, farm income rose 30 per cent, farm prices 40 per cent, but land values only 7 per cent. Considering the provocation to wild commitments after so many lean years, this is encouraging. Another tenet in Farm Credit Administration policy is to encourage farmers to build reserves whenever their incomes rise, by making future payments in advance on existing debt. Again rising war-time incomes have tested the success of this educational theme, and it has been found that future payments and the retirement of debt in general have been gratifying.

By common consent the work of the Farm Credit Administration, by the time of the war crisis, had made successful farmers better off and the relatively unsuccessful no worse off. Debt adjustment and refinancing at present are matters of administrative policy rather than of legislative mandate policy. In such a situation much necessarily depends on the ingenuity and social insight of the personnel, on skill in making the most of procedures at hand. Now more than ever will this skill be needed, both to fit the credit instruments of government into the pattern of a stable war economy and to help in smoothing the way to a durable peace.

### *The Instrument for Saving the Soil*

Government aid in preserving agriculture's prime resource, the soil itself, came belatedly, but grew by tremendous leaps and bounds during the last decade. The

interest then was far different from the uncomplicated demand for free land and seeds, the seeds that used to litter Abe Lincoln's office desk after he had forgotten to hand them out to his constituents. Right up to the beginning of the last decade, conservation centered on national forests and public parks, on forest-fire protection. Through the years the destruction of American timber resources was much more effectively dramatized than the equally important and complementary tragedy of soil erosion. Experts were fully aware of impending disaster, but they had no mandate to do anything about it. The general public and farmers themselves had difficulty realizing that no longer was there enough land to satisfy everyone who wanted to make his living from the soil. The general impression was that if a man knew how to farm well enough, he could always make his way.

As the farm population increased at a far greater rate than the increase in alternative avenues of employment, competition became more intense. Rural life strained to accommodate itself to urban life. The soil was worked harder. Under relentless economic pressure the tenancy system spread, and tenancy usually brings abuse of the soil in its wake. Enormous cutover areas appeared in the Lake States. Gullies scarred the rolling lands of the Piedmont and the Northern Plains. When the wind was high, overgrazed western ranges began lightly to blow away, sometimes bronzing the air with great clouds of dust. And everywhere from New Hampshire to Oregon where farmers ploughed sloping land in straight furrows, the straight furrows of which the American farmer is so proud, rain-water swept away fine sheets of soil year after year. When agriculture hit rock bottom in 1932, destruction of the

soil had reached such a pass that for thousands upon thousands of tenants it was simply a physical impossibility to make a living from their holdings or rented acres. To remedy the situation the Soil Conservation Service, originally known as the Soil Erosion Service, was created in 1933 as a part of the Department of Interior, and transferred to the Department of Agriculture in 1935. Its job was defined as not only to direct the acquisition of forests and submarginal land, but to bring to farmers more intimate knowledge of proper land use. The Taylor Grazing Act of the same year extended the program to grazing lands.

If there ever were justification for governmental action, it surely would be in dealing with the conservation of national resources. However, the Soil Conservation Service's policy has been to emphasize education and cooperation. At first small watersheds, from 8000 to 200,000 acres in size and averaging about 25,000 acres, were chosen region by region according to type of farming and terrain. Within these demonstration areas the SCS entered into five-year cooperative agreements with farmers willing to be shown how to improve their soil and the use of it. The Civilian Conservation Corps supplied some of the heavy equipment, and the boys of the Corps supplied some of the labor, but the farmer, at least on his own holdings, was expected to chip in with manpower and tools.

But this was not enough. As the months passed, it became increasingly evident that a more flexible and localized approach was necessary. Accordingly, the Department of Agriculture embarked in 1938 upon active encouragement of the enactment by states of state laws which authorized the formation of soil-conservation dis-

tricts similar in many respects to drainage and irrigation districts. Today 43 states have adopted such laws and more than 700 soil conservation districts have been formed. Familiar enough to those farmers, legislators, and officials who had participated in the enactment of the laws providing for irrigation and drainage districts laws, the soil-conservation laws had some notable features. One was the extent to which they provided direct access to and help from government agricultural agencies—county, state, national—in planning their soil-saving programs and in carrying them out. The other very important aspect of these laws was the provision that farmers in such a district can enact ordinances regulating land use on all farms within the district.

The work of SCS is of great variety. In San Diego County, California, it is the task of the Soil Conservation Service, within the network of state law, to find alternative supplies of fresh water to replace that used in artesian wells, by collecting the surface run-off. In Alabama SCS has planted acre after acre of kudzu, a tough plant that helps to make inexpensive hillside terraces. In the Corn Belt, farmers to a man have been shown how to save their valuable topsoil by contour ploughing and the use of basin listers. On the Mississippi Delta, drainage districts that will replace and extend archaic systems are in process of construction. This means cooperation with the Army, with the state engineers, with the Department of the Interior. In the Lake States reforestation is under way. In one district alone 18,000 acres have been recovered since 1939. Controlled range use on a Montana range has helped to raise the average weight of yearling steers from 550-650 pounds to 750-850 pounds.

It was through such work as this that the soil-conservation programs, by the time war reached our country, had placed dams to the rising threat of erosion, had taken thousands of acres of wasted land out of farming use, and had increased the productive capacity of the nation's main physical resource, the soil itself. The physical means of producing in the nation's agricultural plant had been refurbished just as a factory would be put in better working order. But more than that, through the cooperation of state and national governments, a means had been found of enabling farmers themselves to act as a group for the protection of the soil. This is a point that is at least as important as the actual preservation of the soil resource, important alike in war and in peace and important enough to call for elaboration in detail later in this book.

### *The Instrument for Family Rehabilitation*

Rehabilitation is a final instance, for purposes of this discussion, in which government has reached into agrarian life. Here there was no precedent at all, unless the county poorhouse can be so considered. Reforms in surplus and price control, as well as in agricultural credit, had a long history. Reforms in conservation were not without precursors, mostly on a state level. But rehabilitation for the poor farmer, teaching him how to live on the soil, was a reflex of the national depression. The first rural relief program started with the Federal Emergency Relief Administration in the late spring of 1933. It was a state-administered program under loose and, so it proved, inadequate Federal supervision. It began with grants for food, for a little seed, a new plow blade.

This preliminary contact with rural poverty revealed



staggering areas of distress. In the Plains States, drought and erosion were destroying the last feeble hold on the land of many tenants, creating an army of nomads, an army of American families condemned to wandering over the face of the country looking for a place to earn a pittance. In the South, the disorganization in the cotton economy was producing similar disasters, and tenants increased by the thousands. In the cutover regions of the Lake States and the Northwest, of New England and the Appalachians, part-time farming was dying out, now that industry no longer made contributions to the family living. Unmistakably it was "farm relief," now a crisis transcending state or regional boundaries, and as a national problem exceeding any previous proportions. The Resettlement Administration was formed in 1935 to undertake the specifically agricultural relief work of the FERA. Originally, agricultural relief funds had been handled by a network of state corporations, but the comptroller-general had ruled that central control of relief funds was required. Accordingly, a national office was established in Washington to act as the clearing house for offices in twelve regions.

Emphasis was on resettlement, the removal of hard-hit farm families from poor land to land where under proper supervision they could make a living. Some precedent for this work had been set by a Division of Subsistence Homesteads in the Department of the Interior. Some of the homesteads built by the Resettlement Administration were of the scattered farm type, others were of a community type, run either cooperatively or by individual distribution of the acreage. All entailed large purchases of land, not only to retire submarginal areas but to give the de-

pressed farmers a decent place to move to. Many of these resettled farmers and countless thousands of others in the low brackets were made eligible for loans, ranging as a rule between \$250 to \$500. A program of debt adjustment corresponding to Farm Credit Administration's, of better leasing, of improved farm and home management, of medical care was launched. For the crop nomads, the "Okies" and "Arkies," migratory camps were built. The main instrument of rehabilitation was the supervised character loan. The loan system was refined to accord with the hundred and one needs of the poor farmer. All of the loans are alike, however, insofar as they are secured by adherence to a written farm and home management plan, and usually run for a maximum of five years at five per cent. The loans may put the farmer in a position to buy a tractor, tools, feed, seed, livestock; they may enable him to install a water supply, to belong to a purchasing cooperative, to finance membership in a rural medical association.

Of all the governmental devices used to further production of foods needed for war, few are of more potential importance than the Farm Security Administration. Grants and loans have gone to roughly a million poor farmers, including a sizable number to those who, in the year immediately prior to our going to war, were forced off their farms by the taking of land for military and industrial establishments. From the standpoint of our war situation and war needs, the job done through these mechanisms is well-nigh indispensable. Simply raising prices would insure heavier production among relatively well-off farmers. But to reach poorer farmers in a way to enable them to contribute is a job that could not have been done without an already existent way to do it.

Such are some of the main action agencies set up on behalf of agriculture. Others such as Rural Electrification Administration, Agricultural Marketing Administration, and the many companion agencies require no elaboration here. Through them, a composite agricultural policy is brought to work in the lives of 6,000,000 farm families. Innumerable daily contacts create filaments of action and reaction reinforcing the web of governmental policy. In the four organizations discussed in some detail above, 44,000 persons are employed to further the immense work of keeping agriculture shipshape and on an even keel. These are the experts whom the national government has hired on behalf of its rural citizens. With their specialized knowledge on the innumerable fronts, they can help, and are helping, farmers to do their part in winning the war.

The job of seeing to it that all possible official energy and skill are used in the service of this production campaign is that of the State and County War Boards set up throughout the country by the Secretary of Agriculture. Their principal job is to bring about harmony in administration of all Department programs which impinge directly on individual farmers and to prevent overlapping and duplication, both of course to the end that victory be achieved. The membership of these boards includes the state or the county representative, as the case may be, of each of the "action" agencies of the Department, plus the Director of Extension of the state level or the county agent at the county level. The AAA representative on the county board who acts as the chairman is a farmer elected by other farmers. The other members are full-time officials. In the case of the state board the chairman is a farmer appointed by the Secretary of Agriculture. In effect then the war boards function primarily as agents of

the Secretary, carrying out his orders and instructions, in the drive to help win the war.

*In the Neighborhoods: The County Agent*

Yet another word, and a resounding one, needs to be spoken on this subject, however. Just as we have seen how national goals of production and obstacles to achievement of those goals mean little except as they are the goals and problems of individual farmers, so the governmental helping hand to agriculture means a great deal more when it is brought to a local focus. Each of the national agricultural agencies has a farflung system of officials and agents, and each of them has sought, in one way or another, to pull the farmer into its conduct. But in the last analysis the focal point of all these programs, and of state programs too in many instances, remains the county agricultural agent, representing Federal, state, and local governments in their cooperative aid to farmers. Even today, with all of the new and spreading services to farmers, the county agent usually will be found to be the most effective of all the public agricultural hired men in any one county.

The county agent is the heart of the nation-wide system of state and national extension services, and the state extension services are arms of the Land-Grant Colleges set up more than three-quarters of a century ago by a Congress that, as M. L. Wilson has said, "wanted these colleges to be colleges of the common people." Two years ago the Extension Service which represented a new extension of the same democratic principle, celebrated a quarter century of growth. Set up under the Smith-Lever Act of 1914, the Extension Service's primary function was informational and educational. It was to carry right into the county means whereby every farmer would have the chance to get

and use the results of scientific research and the most advanced thought on problems of agriculture.

Agricultural extension has been more than justified by its fruits. Its real impress upon farm life is reflected in its growth from a very small agency to where its total budget runs to well over \$30,000,000 a year. About 9000 extension workers are now engaged in the various ramifications of the job of informing farmers and helping them to solve their problems on their own farms and in their own communities. These workers include a variety of experts in numerous branches of agriculture working both at national and state levels. They form a staff of administrators and scientific specialists in Washington, and a similar organization in each state built upon the county agricultural and home demonstration agents, and club leaders as a base. The Washington staff cooperates with the state staffs in carrying out the mandates of the Smith-Lever and other acts, and helps to relate the extension work of other national agricultural agencies to work done in the state by state agencies. In each state, the staff is headed by a state director of extension work located at the Land-Grant College, just as there is a Federal director in Washington. In the staid words of the U. S. Government Manual, the job of all these workers is to carry to farm people "the results of research conducted by the Department of Agriculture, the Land-Grant institutions, and other research agencies, adapted to local farm and home conditions" and to "serve as an educational field force for the various action and credit agencies of the Department."

Better than that, however, as definition of the earlier function and the new areas into which Extension work has ventured or has been forced by circumstance to explore, are these words, also of M. L. Wilson, the present Federal

Director: "In a few areas today, and in some areas in the past, county agents have rendered primarily special and individual services, being in a sense cafeteria workers who served up advice on sheep, diseases of cattle, spraying of fruit trees, laying out of terraces, and on many other special topics as this advice was needed. Gradually, under the impact of action programs, and changing agricultural situations, they found that their field of service could be much enlarged by working through groups with a somewhat broader set of problems. This program now leads them still further in the direction of considering not only isolated problems relating to farm income, farm practices, conservation, and the like, but requires that they become social engineers—aware of and dealing constructively with the whole of the inter-relationships in the cultural setting."

These words emphasize what is both the primary call upon Extension workers, notably the county agent, and also the principal source of strength of the whole organization. This is its reliance upon active interplay between government and farmer in the person of the county agent and his neighbors. The great overwhelming idea that has made the Extension Service indispensable in modern American agriculture is the idea of bringing down to the neighborhood all of those modern weapons for winning a better living that the devices of government now can make available to the ordinary citizen. The lesson is one that can well be used for other arms of government engaged in other fields of work. Above all, it is a lesson that stands clear before us for war. National leaders can make the winning of this grim struggle easier in the degree that they learn this lesson and put it into practice in all the neighborhoods, rural and urban, of the United States.

### III

## The Federal System in War and Peace

"It is part of the American character to consider nothing as desperate, to surmount every difficulty by resolution and contrivance."—THOMAS JEFFERSON, letter to his sister.

The unique symmetry of the American form of government rests mainly upon two relatively new political devices: the Federal system and the system of checks and balances. Like the L'Enfant plan for the city of Washington, it is a symmetry that is due to deliberate, careful planning by the Founding Fathers; and, also like the L'Enfant plan, it has changed in detail to absorb the violent impacts of war and peace but has kept its essential outline. Each of these two systems, that of checks and balances and that of complementary state and Federal sovereignties, operates upon the other. That is to say, the checks and balances of the national government are repeated in each of the forty-eight states; and the balance between national government and state governments changes as power fluctuates among the three arms of the national government.

It is a truism that the course of American history is largely the story of the swaying balance in each of these new political institutions. The Constitutional Convention itself was the major arena where the large and small states, rich men and poor, business and agriculture, fought the issues of political structure and economics to the

compromise that resulted in the fashioning of this kind of government. The Civil War was the bloody resolution of conflict between differing conceptions of state and Federal authorities. In our own day, the dramatic struggle for a limitation of judicial power is vivid in our memories. In sum, the balance has always swung back and forth between national power and state power, on the one hand, and between executive and judicial and legislative power, on the other hand. Regardless of our individual preference for sides in any of these controversies, all of us are proud that the symmetry has been maintained, that the planning of the Founding Fathers has stood so well the tests of the decades. Now, in this war, it faces its severest trial.

War has put to the question not simply our particular form of democracy, but democracy of all kinds everywhere. Yet it is our own form of government that must meet the challenge here at home. We have worked out that form, and on its essential rightness we must stand or fall; it is our task to adapt our kind of government to the successful waging of the war. Finally, it is up to us to carry into the years of peace ahead the torch that has been passed to us by the men who in 1776 wrote that to secure "certain inalienable rights, . . . Governments are instituted among men, deriving their just powers from the consent of the governed," and placed their lives and fortunes in the scales to prove it.

### *The Democratic Process Between Elections*

When the question of how a government bureau is to function is placed in such terms as this, it has a good deal of life in it. In such a framework, the problems implied in the discussion in the preceding chapter become of almost



crucial import. There are many agricultural problems and many agencies that are not included in that quick review. But the examples should be sufficient to emphasize the enormity both of the problems and of the administrative difficulties involved in dealing with the problems.

There are at least two ways of looking at the rather staggering mandates of the people, as expressed in legislative enactments, to do something about the plight of the rural people of the United States. One possible angle of observation is that the authorization is itself a sufficient expression of the democratic principle, that is to say, that when Congress directed the Secretary of Agriculture to do thus-and-so, the will of the majority of the people thereby was expressed, and that nothing remained but for administrators and technicians to work out what they thought were the best methods of executing those instructions.

This would be a simple task as compared with operating according to the opposing view: that active participation by farmers themselves in the devising and administering of programs is an essential part of the democratic process. Indeed, such participation today is just as essential a part of democracy as is the enactment by the duly elected representatives of the people of the legislation that sets up such programs. This is a vastly harder way of working than that of simple fiat. It is much harder, for that matter, to make even the simplest democracy operate even under the easiest possible conditions, than it is to turn the job over to any kind of elite whatsoever. Yet in the long run democracy is not only more desirable for men in general; it is also the only way for men to turn unless they turn backward.

The centralization of authority that has occurred in Federal agricultural programs in recent years is patent to everyone. The tremendous sums that Congress has voted annually for the conduct of these programs, the increased number of employees of the Department of Agriculture engaged in carrying them out, the geographic and economic extent of the programs—all of these are obvious. They have, of course, drawn their share of public criticism. The fear of this centralization of authority was voiced widely in the newspapers when the original Agricultural Adjustment Act was passed. Of the law's authorizations, the *New York Times* said on May 1, 1933, "They constitute an amazing grant of power." It found some solace in the belief that in view of economic trends of that year "the Administration may make little use of the vast dictatorial powers it is about to receive over the affairs of a complex and individualistic industry." These are well-grounded fears. Any bureaucracy carries the threat of fascism and the larger and more elaborate it is, the greater the threat.

But in this instance the bureaucracy itself, perhaps in part because it could not manage the duties assigned to it without participation by farmers, has insisted at times upon steps that in themselves tend to make fascism impossible. Reporting on work in 1937-38, the Administrator at that time—the author of this book—of the largest of the agencies set up in the legislation of recent years, the Agricultural Adjustment Administration, had this to say on that score:

"This . . . concept of the administrative function visualizes the action agency as the repository of increased central authority in the field of agriculture. But this au-

thority is not to be imposed from outside; it is to be employed by agriculture for its own benefit. It is not to be used to effectuate planning solely from the top down. Instead, it is to be exercised with the constant consent and approval of the farmers affected and, insofar as possible, with their actual participation in the administrative process. In this way there would be accomplished within the functioning of the Agricultural Adjustment Administration a desirable balance between interests of the general public and of the farmer group; between immediate and long-time objectives; between expert knowledge and farmer experience; and between centralization of authority and decentralization in administration.

"The centralization of Federal authority in the agricultural adjustment programs has been apparent to everyone and frequently has been the basis of attacks by critics. Less frequently perceived, however, and seldom appreciated, has been the parallel trend toward decentralization in planning and administration. Actually, the idea of balanced economy has had its counterpart in 'balanced administration.' Secretary Wallace very early expressed this underlying idea of administration by the simple paradox: 'What we need is greater centralization and decentralization.'"

The experience of the five years, 1934-38, had resulted at that time in thorough acceptance in the Adjustment Administration of this point of view, as may be illustrated by the following quotation from the same document:

"Even though centralized administration may be more efficient and less expensive, it is believed that any method of centrally framing rules and regulations to be applied locally must encounter a fundamental difficulty when it is employed in a continuing program. In the last analysis,

effective administration can proceed only as fast as comprehension and understanding by the farmer. Bureaucratic machinery breaks down sooner or later when it must struggle against an uninformed or unsympathetic public. Moreover, it tends to follow precedent, and hence to become fixed in some conventional pattern rather than to maintain a progressive development. The democratic procedure develops understanding fastest, and in thus strengthening the weakest link it effectively strengthens the whole undertaking.

“Finally, in comparing bureaucratic and democratic procedures for the conduct of agricultural programs in behalf of the general welfare, it is evident that in cases where the farmers themselves make the decisions, they are more interested than before in actually conserving soil fertility and actually contributing to the permanent value of their land. Thus, through such methods the Nation is likely to gain both in better farmers and in better citizens. On the other hand, if the program is bureaucratically administered it faces grave danger of becoming primarily a means of payment distribution—with the farmer’s chief concern that of securing the largest possible allotment of funds.”

The entry of such considerations as these into legislation and the operations of governmental agencies, the issues they involve, have long since ceased to be academic. They are enforcements from deep-seated feelings of the people themselves. This is particularly true in the United States. “Muddling through” has not been a characteristic of British policy alone; and “muddling through” is not any longer good enough, either as a domestic or a foreign policy. Modern life is too swift for that. Clearly, the nations

that do not bother much with majority opinion can act decisively. Clearly, too, domestic and foreign policy are a single cloth, and the nation that is strong internally commands respect abroad. Yet bureaucracy in itself tends to negate the very virtues that give democracy the power to move effectually. Thus, even to the proper conduct of a war, the nation simply cannot afford the paralyzing delays that inhere in rigid centralization of authority.

It is no longer enough for the people to vote every two, four, or six years, and then turn the government over to their elected representatives. Often the actions taken after these elected representatives have voted on a bill are more important in the daily lives of people than the legislative action itself. Government today is so complex and comprehensive that Congress and its committees cannot possibly keep close tab on the multifarious activities of even one day. Here again the need for the "town meeting" method of government is manifest.

Pearl Harbor was the logical end to a decade; the conflict of ideas had been translated into terms of bombs and guns. We are going to win the war of might, and in winning it let us be sure also to win the war of ideas. With our typical "resolution and contrivance" we will win that also. This will not be easy. For farmers, as well as for those in other walks of life, the war will inevitably mean many more government regulations and "interferences" than there were before. We had submitted to some of these even as this book was being written. Undoubtedly there will have been others by the time these lines are read. And there will be more later, either new regulations and directions or more stringent application of those already in force. Those who are in seats of responsibility, harried by

the urgencies of daily and hourly crises, will need to guard against unnecessary and dangerous arrogations of power to themselves. On the other hand, the people will need to maintain under similar stresses their own instinctive attitudes of liberty. The latter necessity is the indispensable one, for those who have walked long as free people cannot easily accept arbitrary actions of authority. There is no question here of patriotism or of willingness to sacrifice to win the war. Indeed, the citizen can do more to win it by continuing to prize his state as a free man than he can by abandoning his pride in that state. So long as citizens retain that pride, they will work gladly to win the war. What they must guard against in subduing too far their individualism, is that they may learn too much the attitude of the sufferer of authority. The best way for both leaders and people to work for victory is by mutual confidence and understanding born of working shoulder to shoulder toward a common objective. What has been learned in the Department of Agriculture in peace goes far to prove these assertions.

### *The Administrators Turn to the People*

So much for generalizations from the years of wrestling with the practical problems of agricultural adjustment. The methods worked out to that end in late years bear directly on the questions of Federal and state sovereignties, the jurisdiction of each, and the crucial problem of cooperation of local authorities and people with Federal authority. It will be useful first to draw a bill of particulars as to how some of the Federal agencies created by Congress have sought in time of peace to make sure that the people did not become weary of standing on their

“own hind legs.” Now that these agencies are part of a war government, these details have immediate implications. What choice have these agencies made, or been able to make, between imposing their programs from above and working them out according to the opinions of farmers? In the quest for an answer, let us look first at the devices of administration these agencies have used.

The job entrusted to AAA has been described in the previous chapter. So far as its Washington organization is concerned, AAA consists of an administrator and five regional directors, each with his staff. Field officials consist mainly of state administrative officers responsible for operation of the program at the state level with whom the county agents of the Extension Service cooperate in the administration of the program at the county level. Now, how did the AAA bring the farmer into the administration of the program? The major device adopted as the fruit of early experiences was the organization of state and county conservation committees of farmers elected by members of county conservation associations. These associations include all of the farmers who are cooperating in limiting the acreage planted to soil-depleting crops, adding to the acreage of soil-conserving crops, and in other phases of the program. Usually they constitute the bulk of the farmers in any county; hence the assertion may be made safely that election by these farmers of their county committees is a fair expression of majority sentiment in the county. The extent to which the county agent influences the actions of these committees is a fluctuating factor; and it is difficult to represent factually the part he plays in these decisions. Some straws in the wind indicate that the major share of the decisions are made by the farmers them-

selves. An astonishingly large number of farmers when questioned on what they regarded as the principal benefit of the program have specified its demand that the farmer think about his problems in relation to those of other people. The AAA state committees are relatively large bodies and the AAA state officer is but one individual. Furthermore, the Washington offices of AAA have engaged in a strenuous effort to obtain farmer participation in the programs. Thus, it may be said safely that state AAA officers are in no position to set themselves up as dictators to the state committees.

Clearly, the nature of a program must mold, to some extent, the administrative devices and techniques employed in its operation. The importance of the poorer farmers to the prosecution of the war has already been indicated, and that point will be elaborated later. It is important, therefore, to look at the peacetime devices used on behalf of this group. Comparison of the Farm Security Administration's set-up with that of the AAA is pertinent here. The FSA's major programs are two: the making of rehabilitation loans to individual farmers not helped through other credit facilities, and the establishment of tenant farmers on farms of their own. Since the FSA is a financial and advisory agency and since there are more needy and tenant farmers in some areas than in others, the FSA's administrative pattern differs radically from that of the AAA. "The (Central) office is responsible for making policy, coordinating the work of the FSA with other agencies, and performs service functions for the field offices," the FSA itself says, and that is a fair statement of the function of the 800 employees on its central staff. The FSA includes, however, thirteen regional offices, where administrative responsibil-



ity centers. The large fiscal responsibilities center there, as does the technical staff.

As channels between the regional and the county offices and for liaison with other agencies, the FSA maintains small state and district offices; but "the 'spearhead' of the Farm Security Administration program is the county office, where applications for loans are made, farm and home plans worked out, and the actual work of planning, supervision, debt adjustment, and collection is done. All contact with borrowers ordinarily is made through the county office."

It is by means of this "spearhead," that is, through the county FSA offices, that farmer participation is obtained in the working of the FSA program. The key to the democratic process here is in the FSA's requirement that a borrower must agree to comply with an approved farm and home plan before he can be granted a loan. The administration of this provision is an excellent example of the practical choice that must be faced when a theoretical program is applied in particular circumstances. Other factors than that of giving the farmer a free choice enter, of course. For one thing, any farmer's adherence to the plan is voluntary. Yet it must be remembered that his acceptance of any plan may be conditioned by his desire to obtain the loan offered him. But these considerations are aside from our main concern here: Does the farmer's opinion enter into the shaping of the plan of operation he follows on his farm? Does he work in sympathy with the plan? Finally, does his share in putting the plan into effect help him to grow into a better member of society?

Again, the best answer that can be given is one not

susceptible to precise statistical proof. But the indications are very strong that an affirmative reply may be made to each of these questions. The FSA's methods themselves are the best pointers. Until recent months, this procedure has been for the FSA official to work out in the farmer's own home a plan that both he and the agency can agree to. Obviously, the FSA has some stake in obtaining his compliance, since it is an agency of government charged with a particular job that it cannot do without the farmer's help. Then, too, such compliance is the FSA's principal security for repayment of its loan. The FSA's objective of assisting the needy farmer will fall of its own weight unless he willingly carries through the plan that has been devised for increasing his wealth and conserving the soil.

It is worth digressing long enough to reprint this much of an editorial of April 6, 1939, from an Alabama newspaper, the *Birmingham News*, regarding the FSA rehabilitation program: "Last year there were almost 19,000 farm families in the State who were borrowing money from the FSA and receiving technical advice and direction in carrying on successful farming operations. The average net worth of 12,000 low-income families who were accepted on the program in 1935 was \$303. The average net worth of families on the program in 1938 had increased to \$442. At present, 99 per cent of these families own their own mules; 85 per cent have cows; and 99 per cent have chickens. . . . These are concrete evidences of the improvement in living standards that have been made. The cost of this program, which combines sound credit and educational assistance, is extremely low in comparison to the benefits that have been gained. The success of the program

has proved conclusively that it is possible to develop a credit system and a live-at-home program which can provide a measure of security for the low-income farmers of the South."

The statistical evidence of astonishing success for the program is not the reason for adducing this comment here; rather, it is the clear indication that such gains could not have been made unless these families had been aggressively sympathetic with the program. This means not only that they have carried out instructions that were given them, but that from the very beginning the plans of work for their farms were drawn jointly by themselves and the FSA county staff. It is very doubtful whether, otherwise, they would have collaborated to the extent that it is clear they have collaborated.

Since then, the FSA has gone a step further with favorable results. It has introduced on an experimental basis in every region a system whereby the farmers themselves, after attendance at a group meeting where the program is discussed, originate the plan of operation for their farms. Under this system, the technician does not lay a finger on the plans until they are brought in to him for approval. Here again, the aim is not alone to cut administrative costs and reduce bureaucratic personnel tendencies, but to encourage the mental growth of the farmer and to give him a deep conviction that when he stands "on his own hind legs" he gets tangible results therefor.

Still another type of organization, with its own procedure adapted to its own designs, is encountered in the Soil Conservation Service organization up to 1942. At that time, AAA and SCS were joined in what is now called the Agricultural Adjustment and Conservation Adminis-

tration. The remarks here relate primarily to the years before this merger. Structural changes have occurred since, but they do not bear upon this discussion, which is directed toward the wartime uses of devices for farmer participation developed by SCS. On the side of bureaucracy, to deal again with that question first, the Soil Conservation Service has included a Washington organization devoted principally to policy and the broad decisions concerning operation of the program. Like the FSA, it centers a good deal of administrative responsibility in large regional offices, seven in number, and like the FSA its lines of administration then run direct to a coordinator in each state, whose duties are what his title implies. He has little or no administrative responsibility. But the SCS contact with the people differs markedly from that of the AAA and FSA. For the SCS program has undertaken to deal with farmers on the basis of partnership in saving the soil. Until three years ago, the principal SCS method of working was to sign with each farmer in a project's jurisdiction who wanted to cooperate, an agreement specifying what the SCS would do for him and what he would do for himself. In the majority of instances, the farmer's cooperation has not been simply in the hope of getting work done on his farm for nothing. The SCS records show fairly conclusively that the amount of manual labor contributed by the Service in its program has been secondary in importance to the technical advice and the heavy equipment it has made available. The actual toil has been contributed to a far greater extent by farmers themselves rather than by Civilian Conservation Corps, Works Progress Administration, or other labor.

So much for the SCS program as it functioned in the

main up until 1939. At that point there entered a new factor. As we have seen, the SCS had leaned heavily upon aggressive farmer sympathy with its aims. The new factor was an attempt at formalizing that sympathy. The medium of formalization was the Soil Conservation District, a governmental subdivision that grew out of the obvious need for some such vehicle of local public action. Unlike the administrative devices mentioned before in this discussion, a Soil Conservation District is a state entity and therefore requires authorization by the state legislature. In nearly all of the 43 states that have adopted enabling acts, a soil conservation district does not levy taxes or issue bonds. Its financing, therefore, comes down to the same partnership that the SCS entered into with the farmers in the first place, plus in some instances state participation but through the districts the farmers now can work with the Federal Government collectively far more effectively than they could as individuals. The significance of the districts is not alone that they are democratic units. True, the members elect the farmer members of the supervisors who are the executive unit of the district, ordinarily five members, three of whom are farmers. And true, too, the district is set up only by petition and referendum, and its decisions are those of a majority or more of the farmers in the district. But the significance of the districts is that they also implement these decisions. Democracy's weakness of recalcitrant individualism here is finding its own cure, for these farmers can force those of their neighbors to go along whose nonconformity threatens the general welfare.

Thus, we have seen how every one of these three major agencies has grown into a giant bureaucracy and then been

forced by the necessities inherent in its aims to turn to direct participation by the people. Indeed, they were forced to begin turning to the people even while they were becoming bureaucracies, so that in a very real sense they never did reach the perfect bureaucratic stage. Throughout the growth of these agencies they were groping toward instruments that would bring them closer to the people they were trying to help.

### *Patterns of State and National Partnership*

Various points in this discussion have touched upon this impelling necessity, inherent in the Federal programs, for administrators to turn again and again toward a more direct contact with the people. This tendency is a relatively new element in our government, and is one that may well be studied closely as a guide to conduct in a war that is going to emphasize these and other large-scale governmental programs. Moreover, it has important clues to the future development of the Federal system of government itself. The changing relationship between state and national agricultural agencies helps to emphasize this. Having inspected the local-national patterns of partnership, let us now review the longer history of the state-national partnership.

Prior to 1933, the majority of the programs designed to assist farm people followed the pattern of the Smith-Lever Act of 1914. In that act the states are promised compensations—funds, personnel, other help—if they will comply with certain conditions. Such legislation contributes in fact the underwriting by the Federal Government of state programs, approved in fluctuant degree in Washington but to all intents and purposes independent. In

various emergencies before 1933 Congress had appropriated money directly to the Secretary of Agriculture and told him to do certain things with it; but such instances were relatively rare. Since 1933 most of the gigantic campaigns for agricultural betterment, however, have called for this kind of approach to farmers' problems. From this circumstance arises the critical need for avoidance of bureaucracy in favor of local guidance of programs.

The relationship between the Department of Agriculture on the one hand, and the State Land-Grant Colleges on the other, is among the most interesting of all Federal-state relationships. The changing nature of that relationship illustrates the steadfastness with which the symmetry of our form of government has been maintained through the changing encroachments of Federal power upon state, and state upon Federal throughout our national life. Let us look briefly, therefore, at the forces that in recent years have served to strengthen this relationship. For one thing, of course, there was the closing of the frontier. Then there was the World War, and the shattering world depression that followed. Somewhere during those years, too, we became a creditor instead of a debtor among the nations of the world. Our population has begun to increase at a much slower rate. As it approaches a stable level, we are feeling more and more the effect of this slowing down. Now we are in the midst of another and even greater war.

As a result of these changes in our national life, we have passed from a day when a farmer's concern was simply to apply his individual efforts to the solution of his individual problems, through a transition period, and into a time when the farmer more and more requires that his government assist him in meeting problems beyond the ability

of an individual to solve. The present war increases this need for governmental action. Through all of these periods the partnership of the Land-Grant Colleges and the Department has endured. The fact that the same year—1862—that saw the birth of the Department witnessed also the enactment of the Morrill Act implies the close relationship between the two agencies. The Morrill Act authorized the Federal grants-in-aid that founded the Land-Grant College system. It is important to notice that such a relationship was foreshadowed because Congress had set up these two agencies in the same general field, that of agriculture, and not because Congress had specified that they should cooperate. Congress merely provided the means for the founding of the colleges and the Department, and the means for their independent growth. From the start, it was obvious that the Department and the colleges would have to make some sort of compact when they began working on the same or related jobs. The developing relationship between the two was a satisfactory one, as is evidenced by the unwillingness of Congress in later acts to change materially the basic provisions of the original law.

The years following the Civil War were years of increasing interest in the wider and more intensive application of science to agriculture, of interest in a use of the advances of mechanics and science that would keep pace with such use in industry. On a smaller scale, it was the equivalent of the present-day concern for spreading abundance after this war. In 1870, Harvard College established the Bussey Institution provided for in the will of Benjamin Bussey, and since conducted mainly as a research institution. Yale had added a professor of agricultural chemistry



to the faculty of Sheffield Scientific School in 1859, and the occupant of this chair, Samuel W. Johnson, joined W. C. Atwater of Wesleyan and Orange Judd of the *American Agriculturist*, in agitation that led in 1875 to the founding of the first agricultural experiment station in America at Connecticut Wesleyan. During these years, of course, research in the Department of Agriculture also was broadening. There were frequent occasions for contact between the scholars and scientists of the colleges and the Department. This was natural, for common interests were the bond between them. They remained entirely independent of each other, and when they worked together they did so not because of joint financing but because of this bond. Even before the Hatch Act was enacted in 1887 to foster state agricultural research there were twelve agricultural experiment stations.

To deal with the new complex of Federal-state relationships between state and Federal governments, the Association of Land-Grant Colleges was founded in October, 1887, inaugurating a period when the colleges and the Department were working more closely with each passing year as the extension of research in agriculture proved more and more rewarding. The insistence of the people upon wider use of science for the advancement of agriculture was increasingly justified. This was shown in the enactment of the Adams Act of 1906 and the Purnell Act of 1925. Both provided additional grants-in-aid for the financing of research work in the colleges. The Department also was expanding its research activities. Within two or three years after the Department had become a full-fledged Executive Department, its expenditures for research were amounting to more than \$1,000,000 annu-

ally, and it was doing work in the relatively new fields of botany, entomology, ornithology and mammalogy, pomology, microscopy, vegetable physiology and pathology, and chemistry.

A corresponding growth of the cooperative method of doing research was also in progress. Even before the formation of the Association of Land-Grant Colleges, in 1887, officials of the colleges had appointed a committee on cooperative research projects and had asked the Department to plan and promote cooperative experiments. The method followed in working out these projects was pretty close to that of today. It involved an exchange of letters stating the project and specifying what function each partner in the project would perform. This cooperative agreement method of doing research is the oldest form of cooperation between the Department of Agriculture and the states. About 1000 major research projects annually are covered by these agreements, of which about half involve straight out cooperation in which no Federal money is contributed.

Despite the obvious success of the experiment stations, however, the conviction grew throughout the country during the years before and after the turn of the century that the fruits of science were not available to the majority of the people who stood most in need of them—the farmers. A new farmer rallying-cry was heard. This was for a means to bring directly to the individual farm the new knowledge that science had supplied for agriculture in general. This means was embodied in the previously mentioned Smith-Lever Act of 1914, the Magna Charta of Federal-state extension work. Within a very few years afterward the county agent made possible by that act had

become a country-wide symbol of a victorious farmer fight for democracy in the enjoyment of the benefits of scientific progress, for opening the reservoirs of knowledge to all. He had become a symbol, too, of group use of such knowledge, for he was not only the agent of the state college and the Department, but he was also visible proof that farmers working together could achieve results impossible for them as individuals.

The Smith-Lever Act was new not only in content and aim, but in its procedures and techniques. For one thing, it provided for support of a public function by contributions from private sources, a potentially mischievous authorization that will be discussed in detail in the succeeding chapter. For another thing, the act required the states to match Federal contributions of funds, and specified in much detail the manner in which the funds were to be expended, placing upon the Federal Department of Agriculture the responsibility for seeing to it that the expenditures were so made. That is, very definite conditions had to be met by each state in order for it to qualify for its share of this new grant-in-aid fund. This new principle tended to set up a radical change throughout the comprehensive framework of the partnership, in agricultural work of all kinds, of the state and national governments. Naturally, it also tended to break down the traditional method of working together. The older method had called for a genuine partnership, that is to say, a relationship between two co-equal partners based on the mutual interest of the two partners rather than on a cash incentive. This was not, perhaps, of tremendous moment so long as government, both state and national, was remote from the individual and the neighborhood. But that condition did not obtain

for very many years. It obtained for twenty years after enactment of the Smith-Lever Act, but soon thereafter the way as well as the extent of cooperation became of overwhelming importance.

### *Covenants Between Truly Equal Partners*

1914, the year when the Smith-Lever Act was passed, is a momentous date in many ways. The Great War that started in August of that year and that three years later had involved our country, had profound consequences for the farmer. Its effect was to speed up economic changes that had been coming about gradually, just as the present, greater war is doing. And as those changes between the two wars began to distress farmers, their demand for democratic dissemination of knowledge was replaced by a cry for protection in their economic rights.

We have already seen some of the legislation that resulted, the proliferation of agencies to make that legislation effective, and the evolution of devices to draw farmers into the operation of those agencies' programs. The distinguishing feature of these laws is that they appropriate funds directly to the Secretary of Agriculture and lay upon him responsibility for achievement of the aims set forth. He cannot shift that responsibility. Where such legislation as the Smith-Lever Act, for instance, spells out in general terms the conditions to be met by a state in order to qualify for Federal grants-in-aid, the newer legislation puts the same responsibility upon the Secretary as has been the case from the beginning in the research activities of the Department. Therefore, the old method of cooperation becomes indispensable in joint efforts by state and Federal agencies in planning and program-making. To

emphasize this point, let us place two quotations side by side. The first is from the very first yearbook of the Department of Agriculture, published in 1894: "That this Department has been a mighty factor in the education of the farmers of this country probably no one will deny. For our purpose, however, it is only necessary to observe here that the Department has developed very strongly in the direction of original research in behalf of agriculture. In considering the history of the experiment stations in the states it should never be forgotten that the Department has for many years had within itself what is practically a great experiment station, and that it is a very important feature in the great system of experimental research in agriculture which has been established in this country, very largely with the aid of funds drawn from the National Treasury."

The other quotation is from a recent statement of the Iowa State College on the role of the Land-Grant Colleges in present-day government agricultural programs: "Careful examination of the role of the land-grant college in Federal programs for adjustment, rehabilitation and conservation reveals avenues for participation in most phases of the planning, presentation and execution of such programs. No other institution seems fitted by organization and prestige to make so great a contribution to the betterment of agriculture. Certain limitations on the cooperation of the college must, however, be observed. To insure a clear understanding of the position of the college, the plan of written agreements should be encouraged between interested agencies concerned in each Federal-state program. A uniform outline for these should be developed to facilitate their preparation and use. Precedent for this procedure is already established in several programs and in

the station project agreements. The ability of the Land-Grant Colleges to make major contributions to government and society is predicated on a reputation for integrity in education and objectivity in research that must be kept inviolate. Any contribution by the college that would endanger this high regard would in itself be a violation of the principle of the conservation of its usefulness."

The philosophy of the Iowa statement and of many decades of precedent in research cooperation animated a meeting at Houston in 1936 of state and Federal officials, out of which came two committees on Federal-state relations, that for the colleges headed by Dean C. E. Ladd of Cornell University and that for the Department headed by M. L. Wilson, then Under-Secretary. And such a spirit was present through two years of informal discussion of joint problems, culminating in a meeting at Mt. Weather, Virginia, in July, 1939, out of which came an agreement that constituted a new charter of relations between the agencies of the two sovereignties, state and national. That statement itself is essentially a cooperative agreement directly in the line of precedent that goes back well before this century began. Because the impact of war upon all our institutions, including the Federal System, is so severe, this agreement deserves inspection at this point.

In the Mt. Weather agreement, the two agencies of the farmer jointly declared that their "relationships in the field of research and extension have been defined in memoranda and established by precedents." They then described the new conditions arising from legislation of recent years, declared that the "broad efforts" of the Land-Grant Colleges "to help farm people build comprehensive programs for rural improvement should be intensified," and that the

colleges and the Department should develop "a cooperative plan for building land use programs and policies and having such programs apply to varying local conditions." That statement committed the Department of Agriculture to two major lines of endeavor. One was to correlate all of its programs in the field; the other was to provide the best machinery available for encouraging participation by farmers in agricultural program-making. The colleges, on their part, pledged an intensification of their efforts to aid and stimulate "farm people to build agricultural or rural programs in communities, counties, areas, states, and regions, and in the formulation of agricultural policies." Specifically it provided that the colleges, through the State Extension Services, should take the responsibility for setting up "in each agricultural county an Agricultural Land Use Planning Committee as a subcommittee of its present County Agricultural Program Building Committee."

So much for the background of one phase of the dealings of the state and Federal Governments with each other in a field of special agricultural importance. This quick review brings us down to what may be regarded as an epochal experiment in these relationships, the establishment of the cooperative agricultural planning system that the Department of Agriculture and the Land-Grant Colleges then operated for more than three years.

Just here, however, is the place to emphasize the lesson to be drawn from the history of agricultural Federal-state relationships in dealing with matters agricultural. This lesson is that partners to any such undertaking must be true partners. There can be no fruitful relationship in a democracy, even as between governmental agencies themselves, that is not truly democratic. This means that neither

partner to undertakings can be made to feel under obligation to the other; neither can be put in the position of having to accept the views of the other under threat of pecuniary loss. Each must have his own dignity, and the joint actions must be under covenants that are genuine mutual agreements. It is to be hoped that this principle can and will be regarded in the difficult years of war and peace that lie ahead.

### *The Start of Grass-Roots Planning*

So much for the backgrounds of agricultural planning committees. It remains to look now at the specific forms in which the Mt. Weather agreement between the Land-Grant Colleges and the Department of Agriculture were implemented.

The base of the grass-roots planning organization, for which that agreement was the charter, was the community committee. The community agricultural planning committees set up under that charter were made entirely of farm men and women from several neighborhoods whose interests were similar. These community committees were formed to discuss their problems, to reconcile views, and shape ideas and recommendations before presenting them to their county committee. This is what constitutes the "grass-roots" planning process. In the county committees the results of this mental threshing job are used in making recommendations for action affecting the county as a whole. Discussion and compromise are repeated in arriving at the county plans.

The Mt. Weather agreement provided that farm men and women should make up a majority of the county committee's membership. At least ten farmers were to be mem-



bers, and the others were to be representatives of various agencies of the Department of Agriculture, and of other state and local agencies in the county concerned with agriculture. The committee had a farmer chairman, and the county agricultural agent usually served as secretary. Moreover, farm men and women on the county committee ordinarily included representatives from each community committee. Thus, the problems and suggested solutions presented by every community committee could be discussed and considered fully in making recommendations for the county.

It turned out that much of the planning work in the county was handled on a community basis by the community committees, under guidance of the county committee. Always the results of the community groups' activities were reviewed by the county committee in arriving at county-wide proposals for action. It made no difference where ideas came from, whether they were for individuals, groups, or communities, or whether they were to be carried out by public agencies—local, state, and national. Planning for the improvement of purely local situations which do not call for outside assistance proved to be one of the most fruitful fields of work for these committees.

In the county committee so-called land use classification maps, made by the community committees, were put together and studied to determine plans and recommendations for the entire county. At this stage active cooperation between farmers, program administrators, and technicians became imperative for the consideration, in the light of information supplied by program administrators and technicians, of suggested solutions to farm problems.

Cooperation of technicians and administrators in supplying research data, in pointing out ways of action, and in indicating legislative limitations beyond which action by their agencies could not go, was a convenience and a service of real value in making usable plans. This type of cooperation was particularly useful in developing ideas upon which reasonably prompt action could be obtained.

Participation of local administrators of programs has been helpful in other ways. Those who were engaged in this work like to say it involved "horizontal planning" as well as "vertical planning." This is what that means: Suppose that a county committee asked for action by a public agency. The local administrator for that agency naturally knew at once of the request and the reasons for it, because he was sitting at the table when the matter came up. If the request could be granted immediately, perhaps the administrator could quickly inform the committee of that fact. Sometimes administrative policies were adjusted immediately. In such instances, the public agencies' representatives on the committee were a direct link between the county planning committee and administrative headquarters. Of definite aid, too, were the Land-Grant Colleges in providing technical assistance and research facilities needed to assist the committees in analyzing their problems. In other cases, major changes in policy were required, and, in some, new legislation was needed before anything could be done.

To turn from the purely local set-up, the state agricultural planning committee's membership included farmers from each type-of-farming area in the state, and representatives of state and Department of Agriculture agencies.

The chairman was the director of the state extension service, and the state representative of the Bureau of Agricultural Economics usually was secretary. The director of the state agricultural experiment station was a member.

An important aspect of this committee was that it gave farmers and local, state, and Department officials an opportunity to meet together and to become better informed about the work each was doing. Pertinent findings and recommendations of the state committee were passed on by this committee to the Department of Agriculture. In many cases, however, immediate action was obtained in the state through sources other than the Department, particularly when the measures desired were of a purely state character and properly a matter for local or state action.

A two-way flow of information and recommendations was established by the planning organization. In other words, the organization was not set up simply to send conclusions of farmers to the state committees and the Department of Agriculture. Most of these, to be sure, did originate in the community and county committees, and did flow to the Department of Agriculture. Provision was made, however, for exchange of information and conclusions between agencies of the Department, Land-Grant Colleges, and state, county, and community committees, so that all of them could agree on steps to be taken and have the advantage of using all pertinent facts. In other words, this kind of policy-making is not simply a matter of making recommendations but is a cooperative job to which everybody contributes in reaching mutually satisfactory agreements upon plans and policies.

To enable the Department of Agriculture to do its part in the planning task, the Department was reorganized in

October, 1938, and the Bureau of Agricultural Economics was designated as its central planning agency.

When recommendations of committees arrived in Washington from the states, the same effort was made to fuse the opinions of farmers, technicians, and administrators into workable plans. By means of this organization, extending from communities, through counties and states to the Department of Agriculture, long strides were taken in the last three years to make democratic planning a reality for American farmers. At the same time, the public agencies of local and state governments and the Department of Agriculture benefited from farmer opinions and guidance in coordinating programs and fitting them to local needs.

### *Crop Forecasts and Agricultural Planning*

The Mt. Weather agreement between the Department of Agriculture and the Land-Grant Colleges was the charter of "a new birth of freedom" in the working together of those two institutions; and the visible sign and seal of that charter was the decision to inaugurate agricultural planning on a nation-wide scale. The decision was the logical sequel to the efforts of administrative agencies, described earlier in this chapter, to draw farmers themselves into the administration of national programs. For agricultural planning was simply an attempt to do the same thing in the formulation of changes in existing agricultural programs or even of new programs.

Woven into the thinking of the men who set about charting this new job was the experience of many years of trying to help farmers to live a better life. In the states and in Washington were hundreds of men who had lived through many of the years, good and bad alike for farm-

ers, which have been touched upon above in the discussion of Federal-state relations. Most of them had been concerned, in one way or another, with trying to give to farmers the knowledge that experts had accumulated, so that farmers themselves could use that knowledge in planning operations on their own farms. The story of the development of the forecasting of crops and markets several decades ago is a concrete illustration of one highly fruitful cooperation of Federal and state agencies, and farmers themselves.

In the twenties and thirties this interest was principally expressed through the development of what came to be called "outlook" work. A brief look at how this work developed will assist the reader materially not only in observing Federal-state relationships but also in understanding some of the influences back of the agricultural planning movement. In 1923, Dr. H. C. Taylor, first chief of the Bureau of Agricultural Economics and the elder Wallace, Henry C., then Secretary of Agriculture, both felt strongly that so far as practicable, the results of research should be disseminated among working farmers and so provide useful guides to production and marketing. For many years, almost since Civil War days in fact, when the Department of Agriculture was organized, a crop reporting service had been active. This practice developed through the years into a system of collecting country-wide "intentions to plant," in which farmers, numbering 300,000, voluntarily reported on what they intended to do on their own farms. By 1913, forecasts in bulletin form were given out on the basis of these "intentions to plant." In the outlook conference the forecasts and analyses were greatly refined. In the spring of 1923, a group of econo-

mists and statisticians in and out of the Department met to prefigure how yields would line up with demand, and so determine price. This work was carried on behind closed doors in order to insure against leaks to speculators in commodities. The conference's findings were very well received, and in time a year-round service offered monthly bulletins. The purpose behind the outlook work, according to Dr. Taylor's description, was not "to formulate an agricultural program but to draw a picture of conditions with respect to the probable supply and demand throughout the competing areas. . . . The farmers were not to be told what to do, but given facts they needed in order to act intelligently." As it proved, the outlook conferences were powerless, so far as solving the dilemma of "surplus" food and hungry people went, but they were instrumental in advancing the technique of getting usable information into the farmer's hands.

Outlook reports were chiefly centered on the price prospects for individual commodities, and were at first an end-product of specialized economic analysis. However, in the nature of things the price problem stimulated interest in contextual problems. It led to refined type-of-farming studies, which in turn furthered farm-management research, and finally developed into regional plans for adjustment. In other words, the outlook work gave added impetus to all manner of synthesis, to many-sided attacks on agricultural maladjustment, and especially to planning marked by strict attention to concrete reference. By 1929, the annual agricultural outlook report released in the month of February contained separate summaries for the East, Midwest, the Far West, and the Southeast. A 1932 report stated that farmers' outlook meetings in

1930-31 had reached nearly 100,000 southern farmers as compared with one-fifth that number the previous year. Total attendance at local outlook meetings grew from 135,000 in 1928, to 845,000 by 1941. More than a million farmers were using the Extension Service's outlook reports, according to recent figures, and in 1941 perhaps as many as four times that number attended meetings at which outlook information was discussed.

It has been said many times that "the average farmer plans next year's production according to this year's prices." The post-war agricultural depression of the early 1920's convinced many leaders, both inside and outside agriculture, that some means must be found of planning the production and marketing of farm products on a more intelligent basis. They felt that economic research should become less a record of the past and more a guide to the future.

Individualism was such a strong tradition within agriculture, however, that the prevailing concept of agricultural adjustment was to give farmers the best available information on the prospective total supply and demand, and let them adjust their individual operations accordingly. From 1923 to 1933, the outlook work was shaped largely by this tradition of individualism albeit outlook information did play an important part in guiding the cooperative marketing of farm products. A reader of Wallaces' Farmer, in 1928, made the interesting suggestion that agricultural statistics would be of great value to the farmer as a means of cutting down on surplus production if every farmer would study the outlook and then, for example, market a certain percentage of his brood sows, corresponding with his share of the surplus. And later the Fed-

eral Farm Board relied heavily on such education as one hopeful means of adjustment.

The first requisite for use of outlook information by the individual farmer was that the outlook report should be complete, and stated in fairly specific terms. A farmer must have the information at the right time of year if it was to be useful in his production and marketing. He must know how the application of outlook information to his farm differed from its application to other farms in his neighborhood, and to other regions. In the production of tree fruits and livestock he needed a long look ahead. The Department and the Land-Grant Colleges set out to obtain better information and to develop techniques of applying it to individual farms.

At no stage was it assumed that the outlook program as such would solve the fundamental problem of the farmers' price disparity, even in commodities where this disparity was due to a distinct overproduction. The outlook program, had it been designed to meet such disparity, would have been headed up a blind alley, because farmers as a whole simply would not or could not in the nature of things reduce their production so extensively as to eliminate the over-all surplus problem in a commodity. That part of the objective which had to do with minimizing the fluctuations in the total supply could be successful only if so many farmers followed the outlook report in their production adjustment as to influence significantly the supply in any one year as compared with the supply over a period of years. Even this degree of fluctuation was not achieved. This pointed to the necessity of supplementing, not replacing, individual effort by over-all cooperative programs sponsored by public agencies and voluntarily participated



in by the individual farmers. Hence, the giant "action" programs already discussed were superimposed upon the education done through the medium of the outlook work, to achieve the necessary adjustment and to set up production goals.

From 1933 on, outlook work was powerfully affected by the new philosophy of a balanced agricultural economy. Experience gained in reporting on the outlook helped shape the rationale of many of the new programs, and was for its part given a new direction by them. Fewer and fewer agricultural outlook conferences were held as such (there was little outlook in any case in some of those years!), and yet more use was made of the information than ever before. In the AAA, for example, outlook experience influenced the decision to set up a program-planning division, part of the duty of which was to devise means of allocating crop reductions in the most strategic fashion. It was in consequence of this step that in 1935, the AAA planning division and the Bureau of Agricultural Economics sponsored a regional adjustments study, followed in 1935 by the organization of a county agricultural adjustment planning project, both joint enterprises of the Federal agencies and the State Extension Services. Representatives of the two were asked to contact farmers throughout the country, in order to find out what adjustments in land use and farm management were imperative, and how, when made, the changes would affect production, region by region. By the early summer of 1936, the survey was complete, and was used as a basis for a revision of the AAA program to conform more closely to local needs.

About this time, however, the AAA program as then

constituted was held invalid by the Supreme Court. A single agreement, between farmer and government, in which the farm was regarded as a unit, replaced the separate commodity agreements. Good soil use on each farm was given equal weight with historical production in planning allotments for each farm. The outlook school of thought was largely responsible for this shift of emphasis to individual farm and home planning, which became one of the prominent features of the whole adjustment program. A major factor here was the work during his years with the Bureau of Agricultural Economics, of J. B. Hutson, now head of the Commodity Credit Corporation, on popularizing a simplified farm budget. This budget was keyed to meet trends revealed by the outlook program. Most of the action work of the Department in fact, has profited from this experience. Individual farm and home planning are the cornerstones of the Farm Security Administration's rehabilitation program. The farm and home plan, indeed, is the only real security for the vast majority of rehabilitation loans, for such chattels as the poor farmer can put up as collateral are seldom worth the handling. The Soil Conservation Service program has always taken into account the necessity of equating long-range conservation with a current plan of production for income, as well as the probable effect of conservation on the farm economy over a lengthy period. The Farm Credit Administration is placing more and more reliance on detailed farm budgeting as a means of obtaining credit.

The agricultural agencies of government have found that the most practical method of assisting farmers or farm families in preparing such plans for individual farms is to bring them together in groups which have similar prob-

lems or similar organization. Even more recently, Department of Agriculture agencies have been working together to develop a basic farm plan that would be acceptable to all of them. In other words, agricultural administrators all recognize the fact that there can be only one farm-and-home plan for an individual farm, even though that plan may be shaped in part by two or more programs administered through different agencies.

To look back in summary for a moment, we now have seen how the growth of the far-flung agricultural programs of today forced the administrators of those agencies to turn to the farmers themselves for help in meeting the needs the agencies were set up to meet. We have seen the development through many years of the relationship between the Department of Agriculture and the Land-Grant Colleges. These developments seem to have significance beyond agriculture itself. The problems that were faced by those in charge of the national agricultural programs were simply different versions of similar problems present throughout our economy, and, indeed, present in one form or another in world economy. The problems of agricultural partnership between state and national sovereignties constitute but a vivid microcosm of problems that extend throughout our governmental structure. And the detailed instance—that of outlook work—of one big cooperative job included in this relationship is of special importance in yet another way. For in a very real sense outlook work was the forerunner of the agricultural planning work that was first outlined formally in the Mt. Weather agreement, the Federal-state agreement which was mentioned above. For nearly four years officials of the Department of Agriculture worked with corresponding officers of the states in trying to make a reality of this planning work. Because

the venture yielded some tangible results that bear upon the whole question of the amplification of the democratic process in modern society, it is fitting to discuss the uses of democracy in wartime in some measure in terms of that experience.

Nearly as important as the Federal system itself, however, to the free functioning of our democratic society is a full understanding of the place in it of the private organizations, representing farmers, labor and business alike, formed to advance the interests of particular groups. Just as the relative positions in our political economy of state and Federal authorities have sometimes been confused, so the distinction between a private organization and a citizen-government committee often has not been as clearly drawn as it might have been. To the successful prosecution of the war, the freest possible working of our democratic system through all its parts will be extremely valuable. The country needs all of its reserves of power, and that power is greatest when it includes the energy and devotion of the maximum number of people. It will help those in government and out to draw fully upon those reserves of power if the respective functions of state and national government are exercised freely and without confusion. So, too, it is logical that energy of action in the war can be increased if there is clear definition of the respective functions of private organizations and groups of citizens formed to work for the public interest. In the following chapter, an attempt is made to clarify this distinction before going on to give in detail some of the experience gained in the more than three years during which the cooperative agricultural planning work was carried on.

## IV

### Pressure Groups in an Embattled Democracy

"The representative system of Government . . . possesses a perpetual stamina, as well of body as of mind, and presents itself on the open theatre of the world in a fair and manly manner. Whatever are its excellences or defects they are visible to all."

—THOMAS PAINE, *The Rights of Man*.

A time of stress sends man back to first principles. More than ever is this true in the present. Not only is our nation facing its bitterest ordeal of arms. More than that, the very faith in which it was conceived is questioned by its enemies, and the democratic tenets are made the target of invective. Many of us for a good many years have not examined closely these words and actions. So ingrained is our living with democracy, so complete our acceptance of the democratic idea, that we had almost forgotten that men might propose seriously its abandonment. It is heartening, then, to return to the actions and the words out of which our country was created. How stirring it is to read again the magnificent phrases of the Declaration of Independence, the Bill of Rights, *Common Sense* and *The Crisis*, the manifestoes of Massachusetts and Virginia! The times have made them come alive again. In the midst of ruin and confusion like that of the 1770's, the words leap out at us from the printed page with their old fiery call to battle against "ancient evil, ancient ill," in the President's phrase. They are, indeed, like an alarm bell in the night of today.

So, too, many words that have lost their early savor come alive, and the things they mean take on added meaning, a meaning old but new all over again for us. Earlier in this book it has been said that the devices worked out by government and farmers in recent years, as a means of closer collaboration between the two, bear no startling names, are not sensational. The day-to-day workings of democracy itself are not startling, for that matter. By definition, they are the homely concerns of living. Thus, the word "committee" has long since ceased to stand for a process or activity that in itself is interesting or arousing. "To appoint another committee" has even become a derisory phrase. For that reason, the setting up of AAA committees, of soil conservation boards of supervisors, of agricultural planning committees, perhaps sounds not only innocuous but boring.

But it all depends. A committee of safety, for instance, can become a symbol of refuge if the times are dangerous. Or if such a committee has power and it is used oppressively, the very word "committee" can become a symbol of peril, and its name can arouse powerful hatred. So in our own Revolution, the committees of correspondence came to be the rallying-points of independence, the forts from which the assaults on privilege and injustice were to be conducted. The name was like a device upon a banner of hope. The point is an important one, for the committee system, rightly used, is the essence of democracy and the essence of hope for the future. Therefore, let us listen to Tom Paine, for a moment, telling "the facts . . . unmul-tilated by contrivance or errors of tradition" regarding the beginnings of independent government in America.

Paine's example is Pennsylvania, where each of the

twelve counties had elected a committee at the beginning of the dispute with England. "When it became necessary to proceed to the formation of a government," the Philadelphia committee suggested a conference of all the county committees, and such a conference was held in that city in July, 1776. Then Paine says, and this is worth special note:

"Though these committees had been elected by the people, they were not elected expressly for the purpose, nor invested with the authority of forming a Constitution; and as they could not, consistently with the American idea of Rights, assume such a power, they could only confer upon the matter, and put it into a train of operation. The conferees, therefore, did no more than state the case and recommended to the several counties to elect six representatives for each county, to meet in a Convention at Philadelphia, with powers to form a Constitution, and propose it for public consideration."

Benjamin Franklin was president of this convention, which agreed upon a Constitution, and "ordered it to be published, not as a thing established, but for the consideration of the whole people, their approbation or rejection." In due course, "the Convention reassembled; and the general opinion of the People in approbation of it was then known, the Constitution was signed, sealed and proclaimed on the authority of the people." The point here, Paine adds, is the "regular" nature of the process, "a Government issuing out of a Constitution, formed by the people in their original character; and that Constitution serving not only as an authority, but as a law of controul to the Government." He stresses the desirable consequences of leaning on public consent: "It was the political Bible of

the State. Scarcely a family was without it. Every member of the Government had a copy; and nothing was more common when any debate arose on the principle of a Bill, or on the extent of any species of authority, than for the members to take the printed Constitution out of their pocket, and read the chapter with which such matter in debate was connected."

What was true in a single state was true of the nation as a whole. "Congress, at its first two meetings, in September 1774, and May 1775 . . . had no other authority than what arose from common consent, and the necessity of its acting as a public body." Congress "went no farther than to issue recommendations to the several provincial assemblies, who, at discretion, adopted them or not. Nothing on the part of Congress was compulsive; yet in this situation, it was more faithfully and affectionately obeyed, than was any Government in Europe." Paine's conclusion is that "the strength of Government does not consist in any thing within itself, but in the attachment of a Nation, and the interest which the People feel in supporting it." "When this is lost, Government is but a child in power; and though, like the old Government of France, it may harass individuals for a while, it but facilitates its own fall."

Of the Act of Confederation, Paine says that it was not the act of Congress "because it is repugnant to the principles of representative Government that a body should give power to itself." Rather, he adds, "Congress first informed the several States of the powers which it conceived were necessary to be invested in the Union, to enable it to perform the duties and services required from it; and the States severally agreed with each other; and concentrated



in Congress those powers." His conclusion is that the "compact was that of the People with each other to produce and constitute a Government."

There is more than one moral for our time. The passage quoted above shows what giant trees can grow, for one thing, from the acorns of committees. But back of that, and fundamental to the whole thesis of this book, is the inevitable emphasis upon the necessity of consent on the part of the people, not passive acquiescence but an active consent that is the equivalent of affirmative vigorous action whenever that action is needed. When "the interest which the People feel in supporting it is lost," government is indeed "but a child in power."

The question of national unity was of as much concern to the leaders of the Revolution as it is to us now. Indeed, it was in some respects of even more direct concern, for unity then involved not merely personal agreement by the great majority of individual citizens but agreement on a national rather than a provincial or state basis. Every student of the Revolutionary period, therefore, remarks the care with which the proponents of independence moved in the years before 1776 to make sure the people understood every step that was taken, and that they agreed with these steps. And even the first Congress, as Paine says, had "no other authority than what arose from common consent."

In our time the necessity for full consent of the citizen to the national course of action is less apparent, perhaps, and the issue of state or regional interest as opposed to national is of no great consequence. But fundamentally the necessity for popular consent is at least as great, and in a country as large as ours with an economy so complex, the

difficulties are even greater. Perhaps the modern gain in avenues of communication counterbalances the difficulties, yet nothing can be taken for granted in a matter so vital to the successful conduct of a war for national existence.

Still another aspect of the thinking of our forefathers needs to be taken into account here. This is the matter of responsibility, of accountability for public actions, for decisions of a civic character. It will be recalled that Thomas Paine, in the passage quoted earlier in this chapter, pointed out that the members of the committees of correspondence in Pennsylvania, after they had decided a state constitution was required, did not assume authority to draw up such constitution. They "could only confer upon this matter, and put it into a train of operation." Other action would have been inconsistent "with the American idea of Rights." Moreover, Congress itself similarly referred the question to the states when the Articles of Confederation, "a sort of imperfect federal Constitution," was proposed in 1781. "It is repugnant to the principles of representative Government that a body should give power to itself."

Herein lies part of the answer to those questioners who have thought that such an array of governmental committees and boards as have been set up was unnecessary. In this answer is contained, in fact, the definition of the difference between these government-citizen committees and farmer organizations. So essential is the distinction, and so important is each kind of organization generally in our national life and particularly in time of war, that it is wise here to look closely at the relationship between the two, between, on the one hand, an organization such as the American Farm Bureau Federation, the Farmers Union, or

the National Grange, and, on the other, an agricultural planning committee or an AAA committee.

### *The Fighting Tradition of American Farmers*

The tradition of American farm organizations is a fighting tradition. Elsewhere, farms have sometimes been the strongholds of those who look backward. The American farmer, typically, has been a citizen forced to fight an uphill battle in defense of his economic rights. He long ago learned that one man alone could not be very effective in such fights. And since he learned that lesson, he has banded into groups that could make their voices heard.

Group action more than ever before is important to farmers now, when event crowds upon event until there is danger that the individual will lose his sense of self-direction, will resign himself to the rush of this flood. It is only through group action that the single farmer can make his opinions and desires effective. Through his organizations he can retain at least some control of events. As war creates new problems and new issues, farmers are prepared to play, through their organizations, two important roles: one, the promotion of national unity, and the other, the promotion of the interests of agriculture. The fulfillment of his obligations as citizen, however, becomes paramount to the farmer in war, as it does for every other citizen. Because of the effectiveness of the farm organizations in the mobilizing of public opinion, agriculture now has agencies of government, state and Federal, that are its economic advocates. These agencies are proving invaluable aids to the ultimate victory of the United Nations. Farmers' organizations, now more than ever, can perform and are performing their historic task of preparing the

way for other actions by mobilizing public opinion back of the war and of those legislative and administrative actions that are helping to win through to victory.

Nothing so clearly defines the function of farmers' organizations in American society, and their success in this function, as does a summary of some of the advances that have resulted from their influence upon public opinion. They have formed the pipes that channeled the steam of agrarian discontent, of farmer desires, and made it turn legislative and administrative wheels. This has been true from the organization of the Philadelphia Society for the Promotion of Agriculture and the South Carolina Agricultural Society in 1785 down to the formation of the American Farm Bureau Federation in 1920. It might even be possible to graph the relationship of farmer groups to action. This graph would include three lines that would pretty well parallel each other; the first, showing the desires, inarticulate but insistent, of farmers; the second, voicing of those demands by farmers' organizations to the public and the public's representatives; and the last, a line showing the response of government to the effective formulation of those demands. For example, within little more than a decade after the first farmer groups were formed in the United States, President Washington recommended to Congress, in 1796, the establishment of boards of agriculture.

This interaction continued through the years down to the wreck of the Farmers Alliance and the Populist Party it helped to create, followed by organization of the Farmers' Union in 1902, the formation of the first county farm bureau in 1912, and the growth of the state farm bureaus that culminated in 1920 in organization of the American

Farm Bureau Federation. With the National Grange—oldest of the farm organizations—these groups formed the main channels through which American farmers made their weight felt in the reforms that characterized the nineties and the first four decades of this century. It is unnecessary to relate these organizations in detail to the governmental action that followed their persistent, dauntless battle for farmers' rights and benefits. Out of their work flowed the rural free delivery system, the establishment of the Extension Services, the Federal Farm Loan Act, the vocational education system, and the Grain Futures Act. They also played a prominent part in broader legislation—the Federal Reserve Act, the levying of the Federal Income tax, and the direct election of Senators. In still more recent times farm organizations have fought for such government action to deal with farm problems as the two McNary-Haugen bills, and establishment of the Federal Farm Board.

### *Mingling Private and Public Responsibility*

Now we have a comprehensive, far-flung network of governmental agencies set up to deal with related segments of the farm problem. In a way, they are the children of the farm organizations, certainly of the farmers for whom those organizations speak. Because of decades of insistence by these groups that governmental action was needed, the United States, as has been shown, entered the war with an adequate machinery for dealing with the problems of agriculture. It is the function of the farm organizations now, as it has been in the past, to bring public opinion to bear to keep and improve this system.

But it is not enough for us to look only at the positive

merits of farm organizations. These groups are of such overwhelming importance—as, indeed, are all private organizations usually blanketed under the omnibus term “pressure groups”—to our competitive political economy, that it is not wise to dismiss them with a cursory inspection. And despite the great good that has flowed from the work of farm organizations, alongside these benefits must be placed certain dangerous implications.

The first point to be noticed about farm organizations is that they are in fact “pressure groups.” As such they have been successful in winning many fights for farmers, and that is so much to the good. But they have not always drawn a distinction between this function and the governmental functions that have been authorized as a result of their work. Moreover, legislators and administrators themselves have often lost sight of this distinction. In other words, because a farm organization has battled successfully for a particular kind of governmental farm program does not mean that when the program is established, the farm organization continues to have a prescriptive proprietary interest in it. Certainly, it has the same right as any citizen, or group of citizens, to criticize, to praise some actions and oppose others, and to make recommendations. That is, indeed, one of the major functions—and a thoroughly legitimate, healthy function it is—of farm organizations. But a farm organization, simply because it champions legislation, does not thereby acquire an exclusive interest in the public agency that results from such legislation.

As a matter of fact, it is a very real danger to democracy and good government if any private organization actually does assume a possessive attitude to a public agency, if it

does seek to influence unduly the actions of a public agency. Never has this danger taken more ominous shapes than now. This country has plain before it the terrible experience of other countries. It is just such a confusion of relationships that creates "corporate states"; in just such crossing of private and public lines is the breeding-ground of totalitarianism. America cannot be too careful in seeing to it that it does not "happen here." This is not to say that farm organizations do not have a right, indeed a duty to make recommendations and representations to administrative agencies of government concerning the way governmental programs are operating. Far from it. They would be derelict in their responsibility to their members if they did not guard against administrative loss of legislative victories. Thus, this is a wholly different function from that of the public agency which must act, as nearly as possible, in the interest of the whole people.

The Smith-Lever Act providing Federal funds for assistance to state Extension Services may be taken for illustration. That act, as has been pointed out, was enacted mainly as a result of agitation and insistence by farm organizations. Its fruits have been invaluable to farm people all over the country. Yet when the Smith-Lever Act was adopted in 1914, the interest of farm organizations did not by any means stop. In many states, in fact, there was a legislatively recognized relationship between the county Extension organization and private organizations. This was because the act itself sanctioned such a relationship when it said that the Federal funds provided under the act are to be matched by an equal sum furnished by "the legislature of such State, or provided by State, county, college, local authority, or individual contributions from within

the State, for maintenance of the cooperative agricultural extension work provided for in this Act."

Now that seemed a perfectly natural and innocuous course of action to legislators, farm organization leaders and others in those far-away days, days that now seem indeed an age of innocence. No one then had heard Benito Mussolini's formula for the corporate state, and Hitler was not even a corporal in the German army. The attitude then is well put in a statement by the first president of the American Farm Bureau Federation, James Howard, in a message he addressed to county agents: "The American Farm Bureau Federation is exactly what the individual county farm bureaus make it. And the county farm bureau, I have found again and again, is just what the county agent makes it. . . . I would urge every county agent in America to assume a position of real leadership in his county and to stand or fall on his record as an organizer of farmers into a strong and effective county farm bureau."

Such a relationship now does not appear innocuous at all. In the matter of educational policy alone, it can be extremely dangerous. The Agricultural Extension Services are arms of the Land-Grant Colleges, and the primary function of the entire Extension organization is educational. The United States has had all too many instances of the vital necessity of guarding the schools, the source springs of democracy of the future, from pollution. The attempt of certain utility interests in the twenties to control the content of college courses, by hire of teachers and by other subvention, is but one of many unsavory domestic instances, while abroad there is the classic Nazi example of indoctrination of youth with teachings calculated to



perpetuate the rule of political gangsters. This is not to say that any private organization of any standing in this country is guilty of such evil as attains the Nazis. It is simply to call attention to the perils inherent in the system.

There are other aspects of this matter. The lengths to which confusion of relationship can lead have been pointed out from his own experience by Russell Lord, who has spent most of his life as an agricultural writing man: "My first job out of college, in 1920, was to get out newspaper and campaign material for the Farm Bureau sign-up, and on farm and home demonstration in Hampden County, Massachusetts. The situation in Massachusetts was peculiar and in some ways highly instructive. Extension programs there were openly and rather munificently supported, in certain places, by business interests. . . . My title, Assistant General Secretary, was a disguise. My job was 'publicity.' The greater part of all our salaries was paid not by the State or Federal government but by donations of Massachusetts business concerns. . . .

"In respect to a trainload of farmers sent to Boston to plead for the establishment of a State Police Force, our standards faltered. It is now, I am sure, an open secret that the Federated Industries of Massachusetts put up practically all the fare and lunches for those farmers. . . .

"What had happened sufficiently illustrates the deep water toward which Farm Bureau pressure-politics was leading agricultural extenders, in many places, to warrant mention here. Massachusetts Labor wanted Daylight Saving. Massachusetts Agriculture didn't. Massachusetts Industry wanted a State Police to put down strikers. Massachusetts Agriculture didn't much care.

"Federated Industries and State Farm Bureau leaders made a little dicker. The mildly embattled farmers were to

front for a State Police if the Industries would not push Daylight Saving."

The division of responsibility that leads toward such morasses has been documented in a research study of the University of Chicago, by Gladys Baker, the results of which were published in 1939. After pointing out that the county agent is legally responsible to the county farm-bureau organization in some fifteen states, and that in some eight states, where the county appropriation is mandatory, responsibility to the farm bureau virtually replaces responsibility to public officials, the representatives of the people, Miss Baker observes that in such instances county agents "depend upon the farm bureau to serve as the intermediary organization to insure the continuance of the appropriation." "The degree of responsibility varies considerably even within strongly organized Farm Bureau states," she adds. "The amount of authority which the Farm Bureau exercises cannot always be measured by the terms of the state extension laws, since in Illinois—where county farm bureaus most completely control extension work—state law does not even mention the farm bureau. Some state laws, however, make close working relationship between the county farm bureau and the county agent imperative."

In order to see how this relationship works in the concrete, let us look at a description, from this same work, of how it works in one state. The state is Iowa, which may be taken as fairly typical, if any one state can be so designated, and the name of the county also is Iowa. There, says Miss Baker, the "appropriation for extension work is dependent upon the organization of a farm-aid association with two hundred members and pledges paying a minimum of \$1000 dues," and the county supervisors "must then pay double the amount of farm-bureau dues up to

the limits of \$3000 and \$5000 depending upon the population of the county." Since the county farm-bureau board has considerable discretion in the expenditure of this money, it to all practical purposes decides "the amount of the county agent's salary beyond a minimum of state and Federal funds contributed by the college and can bring about the agent's dismissal by withholding county funds at any time." Miss Baker's conclusion is that it is "almost inevitable" that "the county agent should be unduly concerned with courting the favor of farm-bureau board members and with the problem of keeping the minimum number of members necessary for a county appropriation," as well as "in swelling the number of members to bring about an increase in his salary and prestige."

Of late years, the importance of the county agent has grown as national programs for agriculture have grown. Thus, the confusion of function of a dual responsibility to private and public authority also grows more important. Where before it extended into education and into local and state political questions, now it extends also into Federal matters. This phase of the matter was prominent in the conclusion of this research study that "an interesting development in connection with the trend toward increased public support from the federal and state governments is the release of the formal claim of the county farm bureau upon the county agent in some states." Thus, says Miss Baker, "the informal and extra-official relationships between the county agent and the farm bureau have increased in many states" as government programs grew. The programs were used sometimes to "inaugurate Farm Bureau Federations or to swell the membership," and in some states "the Farm Bureau Federation serves merely as a legislative wing of the state extension service."

The county agricultural agent and the county superintendent of schools are both public servants. The school superintendent is to teach equally well, within his ability, all the children of whatever groups or classes, and his responsibility is to all of the people in his county. The county agent likewise needs to look at his job as that of equal service to the whole public he is called upon to serve. True, those people his office is set up to help are a particular group, that is, farmers. Nevertheless, his duty is to all farmers, members or non-members of farm organizations, rich and poor, Democrat and Republican, white and black, Catholic and Protestant, for he is just as much bound by the terms of his job to impartial service as is any Cabinet officer in the national government. What is true of the county agent individually is true of the Extension Service as a whole, and in turn true of any other arm of government.

By definition, then, such a function can never be performed by a private organization formed by its members to advance their mutual interest, and with no ultimate directive from the whole people. The appointed public official, in the long run, holds tenure at pleasure of the voters, since he is responsible in the last analysis to an "elected person." In effect, then, what legalization of the Farm Bureau organizations' authorization as public agencies means, is that the state requires all its citizens to pay dues for the support of an institution devoted to advancing the interests of only some citizens.

### *The Federation of the Farm Bureaus*

Such a relationship perhaps was of no great moment so long as it was confined in the main to a county basis. The healthy correctives of local opinion could be relied upon

to offset most of the evils that might develop. Moreover, the original local Farm Bureau units were not greatly distinguishable in the early days from an Extension organization. Many of the jobs they did were quasi-governmental. Even today, in some instances these roots go deep into the county. But when the state Farm Bureaus in 1920 organized into the national federation of today, this confusion of private and public function became another matter. Then the American Farm Bureau Federation became exactly the same kind of organization as the Farmers Union or the National Grange, or, for that matter, the American Federation of Labor or the Congress of Industrial Organizations. In other words, whatever quality it had in the beginning that differentiated it from other organizations of private interest disappeared with its entry upon the national scene as a national force. Moreover, the perils implicit in the mingling of private and public function were multiplied. It should be made clear at this point that the conditions described in the preceding pages are peculiar to the American Farm Federation, among all farmers' organizations. The other farm organizations developed along wholly different lines, and the problems implicit in the origins of the Farm Bureau did not obtain then nor do they obtain now.

The ramifications of this interlinking of private and public interest and its continuity into today are illustrated by the presence, as an ex-officio member, of the Federal Director of Extension Work on the executive committee of the Farm Bureau Federation. And the dangers inherent in this crossing of lines, once the Farm Bureau had become a national institution, are well illustrated by more modern instances. There was the well-remembered attempt of the

Congress of Industrial Organizations, then led by John L. Lewis, to hold the national government under obligation because it had made a large contribution to the re-election of President Roosevelt in 1936. This group, too, did not know when to stop.

There is, also, the example of the attempt to form a national federation of AAA committees. Back of the movement, vivid in the memory of some of its sponsors, was the pattern of Farm Bureau-Extension relationship. By 1934, field and Washington officials of the Department of Agriculture began to receive reports of a growing movement for federation of these county AAA committees into state and national organizations. The movement was distinctly patterned on that which had resulted in the enactment of the Smith-Lever Act and the establishment of the Extension Service. Early in 1935 occurred the "farmers' march" on Washington, which many readers will remember. The climax of the "farmers' march" was an address by the President from the south portico of the White House. Following the President's speech, the AAA committeemen who made up the bulk of the marching farmers selected a committee for the purpose specifically of discussing national organization. To their credit, leaders of the American Farm Bureau Federation opposed the proposal, and many in the Department of Agriculture let their fears be known. Ultimately, the idea weakened and came to naught. But against such consequences, all of those interested in democracy cannot be too vigilant. We are engaged now in war against countries where those consequences—and worse—became apparent too late for the people to deal with them, or where conditions were so anti-democratic as to prevent them from acting in any

event. In winning this war, the country cannot afford to create conditions for losing democracy at home, nor does it need to create them.

### *When Farmer Citizen Becomes Public Servant*

Here, again, is where reference to first principles helps to clarify and define. Let us remind ourselves of Thomas Paine's point, that the committees of correspondence did not assume authority to draw up state constitutions, although they were elected bodies. They were elected only to make recommendations, and to exceed that responsibility would have been inconsistent "with the American idea of Rights." How much more careful should be the definition of the duties and responsibilities of private organizations and public agencies! The wide difference becomes apparent in the perspective of the new kinds of collaboration required by the public programs of our day. When farmers sit around a conference table with technicians and administrators, to seek ways of coping with a pressing local problem and to appraise means of public assistance, they are helping administrative officials formulate administrative policies. They are influencing the ways in which governmental programs will be carried out as they reach the community and the individual farm. They are helping to draw the lines of administrative policy by other administrative units, too, by the state, the regions, or the national office.

To take the agricultural planning committees, as an example, the process worked like this: When a local administrative official, through his work with farmers on an agricultural planning committee, saw that certain administrative policies so handicapped his action that the program

did not accomplish what he expected, he brought this fact and supporting information to his superior, sometimes suggesting a specific change of authority or of part of the program. Perhaps he would merely ask for advice and counsel. Often his difficulty ended there. Sometimes the matter had to be carried to the central administrative staff in Washington for study and decision before the question was settled. Perhaps such a proposal would receive approval of the administrative officer authorized to deal with it, and thereby become a matter of administrative policy. Perhaps it was turned down and a counter-proposal made that was adapted to local needs, or perhaps it gave rise to more negotiations and deliberations by both the agency and the planning committee.

A number of proposals made by planning committees for modifications in agricultural programs could not be adopted because of limitations in the law or lack of operating funds. Sometimes weaknesses in the law were discovered and corrected, or the legal basis for the program needed to be extended to cover situations not anticipated by those establishing legislative policy. When these cases arose, the matter was called to the attention of the Secretary of Agriculture or turned over to the appropriate body for appropriate legislative consideration. Sometimes farmers themselves would bring the matter to the attention of political leaders.

Just here, farmers' organizations and the planning groups have complemented each other. Where the latter ended, the former began. Farmers' organizations are effective instruments for obtaining public action to deal with agricultural needs. Planning committees provided them with a wealth of background and information to enrich



their state and national legislative programs. Planning committees and national farm organizations alike have tried to develop agricultural plans and policies, and to keep those plans and policies in step with changing times. But each has its own function and its special devices for attaining these objectives. In their work it was often necessary for planning committees to reconcile diverse interests of individuals and groups in the community, county, and state. They also had to try to reconcile the interests of communities and counties themselves.

Likewise, exercise of any governmental function often involves making a practical compromise between the desires of individuals or local groups, and the general welfare of all citizens. Thus, government-citizen committees cannot indulge in special legislative pleading, the support of candidates for public office, the promotion of special considerations or benefits to their members, the encouragement of purely social activities, and others having no direct bearing upon the task of planning and coordinating public action programs. Such committees, therefore, will never assume the functions of farmers' organizations. The latter have a treasury, appropriate ceremonials, social program, specific educational programs, active public speakers, and assessments for benefits received. None of these would be proper to a semi-governmental committee.

Committees with governmental functions cannot or should not take part in political activities or lend support to any political party or candidate. They are not in a position to pursue legislative measures to final enactment, a major function of farmers' organizations. The Department of Agriculture and the Land-Grant Colleges alike are tax-supported institutions and as such are obligated to work

with and serve all farmers regardless of their political views, their economic status, or their affiliations with farmers' organizations. These institutions of government, of course, have authority and responsibility to work with farmers' organizations but here again their objective should be to show no favoritism and to make their services equally available to all organizations that desire them.

Farmers' organizations, on the other hand, are not government institutions. They select their own membership, determine the scope of their activities, raise funds through membership dues or from profit-making activities, and are governed in their affairs by the natural and legitimate desire to further the interests of their group—farmers—as much as possible. All farmers, therefore, ought to be affiliated with at least one organization made up of farmers, with the protection and promotion of farmers' common interests as its avowed purpose. Farmers need such organizations, organizations unhampered by changing political alignments, government regulations, or economic dependency upon some special-interest group. Farmers' organizations should be free at all times to prosecute the particular interests of their members through legislative programs, referenda, bargaining arrangements, the creation of public opinion, or by any other methods recognized under our democratic form of government. They should be free to crystallize opinions of their members on public issues and to take whatever action is demanded.

Neither the Land-Grant Colleges nor the Department of Agriculture can provide this important service to farmers, nor should they be authorized to do so. Congress and state legislatures recognize the grave danger to our democracy of giving this kind of authority to public agencies,

and have taken numerous precautions to avoid overconcentration of powers in individual agencies. Political activities of public employees are limited under the Hatch Act of 1939 and other acts for the same reason. This is why farmers themselves, while they are performing their duties as AAA committeemen, members of FSA tenant-purchase committees, or others, or as functioning collaborators of some government agency, are subjected to most of the regulations that full-time government employees must observe.

These farmer collaborators, however, differ from regular employees of the Department of Agriculture and the State Extension Services in one important respect. When they finish performing an official duty or assignment, they revert to their status as farmer citizens and are free to engage in political or any other activities open to other citizens. Persons employed full-time either directly on Federal funds or upon grant-in-aid funds supplied to the states, cannot assume this dual role and are subject to the provisions of the Hatch Act of 1939 designed "to prevent pernicious political activity," certain regulations of the Civil Service Acts, and similar restrictions at all times.

Agriculture, like the other parts of our economy, is in an uncertain time. All of those interested in the welfare of farmers will need to do their very best, each in his own way, to meet the tests of the next few years. This is true equally of farm organizations and of public agencies that seek to help farmers. The best way for each to help win the war is for each to do the special job it is best qualified to do; and to pull together while doing it.

Just as pressure groups, farm and labor organizations alike, have a special significance in time of war, so have the

government-citizen committees that have functioned in recent years. Both farm and labor organizations have contributed much to the welding of the American people into a unit with eyes fixed on victory, and both have much to do in the months and years ahead. Likewise, the laymen-official groups that have done such yeoman service in late years have their own chores to do.

### *Old Questions in a New Time*

Later in this book we shall see that government has profited much from the examples of the years of peace and from the experience of individuals and groups in working together on the day-to-day problems of government. It is true that in time of war the opportunities for consultation and discussion before action are much curtailed. Yet a wide field remains for using what has been learned. In the three or four years of cooperation between the Department of Agriculture and the Land-Grant Colleges in agricultural planning, many valuable lessons are implicit. The reader already has seen how this cooperation was the outgrowth of many years of joint activity between the Federal and state governments, and how an effort was made in an agreement between the two drawn up at Mt. Weather, Virginia, in July, 1938, to adapt the relationship to new times.

The significant bearing of this state and local planning work for war-times is sharply pointed up by some pertinent questions raised, after the work had been under way for some time, by F. F. Elliott, of the Bureau of Agricultural Economics. It is instructive to look at the things that then bothered those who were interested in this planning work, for the very same questions can be

raised right now about many of the things involved in winning the war.

"Granted the general desirability," wrote Dr. Elliott, "of bringing the citizen into a responsible relationship with the policy-making process, the question then becomes, what are the techniques through which this responsible relationship may best be expressed? From that point of view, the county agricultural planning committees now operating constitute a series of political science experiment stations, in which part of the democratic procedure of the future is being worked out.

"Some of the questions to which they are in process of finding answers are these:

"To what extent will the focusing of attention on county problems make the planners provincial in their point of view? The sub rosa growth of interstate barriers to trade has been proceeding in recent years at a rate sufficient to rouse considerable concern—will county planning tend to atomize the country into 3000 islands of economic self-sufficiency? Or can a sense of the national general welfare remain a sufficient factor in the sense of the county welfare for the sum of the plans of the counties, when made, to add up to a total that is desirable from the standpoint of the nation as a whole?

"How can local committees be selected so as to be genuinely representative? Except where the election of certain members of local committees is required by law, there is considerable variation over the country as to whether local committees are elected or appointed. In either case, it is important to examine the representation in the resulting group

"Where committees are elected, does the chosen group

correspond to a cross section of the farming population, or does it tend to be made up of the better-to-do farmers who are well-known throughout the community? If the latter, are the proposals made, or the regulations adopted, likely to favor large-scale, highly commercialized, land-owning interests as over against the interests of tenants or laborers, or small owners whose less highly capitalized operations are likely to be a more nearly self-sufficient type? Is this tendency particularly apt to vitiate the democratic process when various interests, say large owners and small owners, have to divide an advantage, as in the case of regulations governing the use of range made by grazing associations under the Taylor Act, or issuance of grazing permits for use of national forest lands?

"Does election of local committees tend to put the farm programs into politics, so that petty courthouse feuds are extended into the fields around the county seat until farm programs are judged less and less on their intrinsic merits? . . .

"How do committees appointed by the county agent compare with those elected by fellow farmers? Is the county agent under pressure to select the 'representative citizens,' the landowners, rather than give places on the committee to less fortunately situated farmers in the community? Does the history of the division of A.A.A. payments between landlords and sharecroppers in the South record friction along these lines in an area where committees have been largely appointed? To what extent do local F.S.A. activities represent the making of farm policy for one group of farmers by another group of farmers?

"Does the weakness which elected committees exhibit when they become embroiled in local politics have a coun-

terpart under an appointive arrangement? Is the county agent tempted to turn to men who are known to be strong supporters of the Extension Service and pick those who have a reputation for 'going along,' leaving the less tractable on the side?

"Does the inclusion on the planning committees of farmers who are being paid for their services in the local administration of action programs result in confusion between genuine farmer opinion and the opinion of men who while operating farms are none the less the 'hired men' of the programs?

"Under either the elective or the appointive system, how good a job of representation has been done when the community consists of two or more races, whites and Negroes, whites and Mexicans, whites and Orientals? . . .

"How can technical and lay opinion be combined? The establishment of a proper relationship between the views of the man behind the plow and the views of the man behind the calculating machine is probably the key problem in farm policy-making. Where 'book-farming' is distrusted, the advantages resulting from scientific investigation lie dormant and the basis for collective action is nullified. On the other hand, where technicians dismiss horse sense as local prejudice, and attempt to force the perfectionism of the laboratory down the throats of the community, progress is also blocked. But where the contributions which the expert and the eyewitnesses each can make . . . can be locally fused . . . science and society have learned to live with each other. Once the technician forgets his essentially advisory capacity, however, bureaucracy is at hand. The technician's function is to assemble facts and reliable estimates of the consequences of alternative uses

that may be made of them. Decision as to what is to be done in the light of this evidence is the function of the citizen and those he elects to represent him, whose tenure, unlike the tenure of the bureaucrat, is subject to his will.

"Where the blueprint and the sense of the meeting are not fused on the local level, the layman and the expert are likely to race each other up to the administrator. And before the administrator, the layman tends to be at a disadvantage; he is a part-time volunteer contesting the views of a full-time professional, who, moreover, is employed by the same organization that employs the administrator. . . .

"Weak county committees that invite official dominance are defaulting on the democratic process at the point where they might otherwise exert their maximum effect on it. They avoid the exertion of finding out about their local situation. They avoid taking the heat on the decisions that must be made if adjustment is to be differentiated in terms of local practices and local topography instead of being forced into conformity with a rigid national formula. And by their avoidance they make a major contribution to bureaucracy, to the entrenchment of officials who will claim to know what is good for the local people because the local people are too supine to find out what is good for themselves.

"Nor do the officials stand to gain any more than the farmers from such a state of affairs. Unless the program under which they are operating is a program about which farmers have genuine convictions based on their own observations and activities, the thing becomes an air plant, with no roots, no stability, no capacity to withstand adverse winds. Such a program could be maintained over a



period of years only by offering such financial inducements for participation that farmers could not afford to stay out. And in the absence of continuous local correctives, it is not improbable that such a program eventually would get so far out of line in its economic effects as to cause farmers to have recourse to policy making by explosion.

"With the growing complexity of economic society, the specific aspects of national policy usually are best worked out if worked out jointly under a general legislative mandate, by the technicians, administrators and citizens with whose occupational specialty the legislation is concerned. Where the democratic process is actively functioning, where citizens are engaged in a continual audit of their public purposes and the techniques they are using to accomplish those purposes, the institutions they now have can serve as experimental models for improved institutions in the future. Given this healthy activity, the framework of American farm institutions will resist both the dry rot of citizen apathy and the spreading fungus of bureaucracy."

### *Getting the Neighborhood into the War Effort*

"A continual audit" of the aims and means of winning the war will serve the nation well now, most readers would agree. It is not simply that government always needs the checkrein of citizen watchfulness; it is much more than that. Government is made up of very fallible human beings, for one thing, and the more sympathetic and vigorous assistance those fallible beings get, the better the results of their functioning are likely to be. For another thing, the citizen himself grows, becomes a better

citizen, if he thinks in terms of his neighbors, indeed if he can think of the whole United States as one vast neighborhood.

There is a great role in this war for such community, county, and state groups of laymen, experts, and program directors, working together, in adapting national war programs to the conditions in a state, county, or community—in making the national programs for winning the war fit locally. The result of such tailoring-to-fit will be beneficial both in making the war effort really “all-out” and in spreading the sacrifices and the privileges alike of contributing to that effort.

More than that, the nation will benefit, in war and peace, from this kind of neighborhood participation in the war. The neighborhood leader system now being rapidly developed like a network over the country by the Extension Service, with war work especially in mind at present, is one way of accomplishing this end. The result will be aroused, intelligent, strenuous unity that comes when every citizen feels he is carrying directly a share of the load.

To clinch this point, reference to the concrete and specific will be helpful. Therefore, the next chapter will draw upon some of the particular instances that the grass-roots planning work made available in the three years before the United States entered the war.

# V

## The Farmer Helps with Government's Chores

"There is no difficulty in showing that the ideally best form of government is that in which the sovereignty, or supreme controlling power in the last resort, is vested in the entire aggregate of the community; every citizen not only having a voice in the exercise of that ultimate sovereignty, but being at least occasionally, called on to take an actual part in the government, by the personal discharge of some public function, local or general."—JOHN STUART MILL, *Representative Government*.

Deep in the heart of Texas nestles Floyd County, named after Dolphin War Floyd, a hero of the Alamo. You get that information from a state highway marker as you enter the county. But a better clue to the way of life in Floyd County lies in the other signs along the road. There are signs about the Farmers Co-op Gin, and the Consumers Fuel Association, and the Rural Electric Co-op, to name just a few. It is clear, at once, that people in Floyd County do a lot of cooperating.

As you enter the leading town, Floydada, you can't miss seeing the new agricultural building. It was built in 1940 with local funds at a cost of \$10,000 as a result of a recommendation made by the agricultural planning committee. In fact, a subcommittee headed by the county farm agent and the county home demonstration agent designed the building. At present it houses the Agricultural Adjustment Agency office and the Extension Service agents, but an addition will soon be built so that all agricultural agen-

cies in the county will be under one roof. That is the way the farmers of Floyd County want it.

The building itself is the pride and joy of the farmers. There is a well-equipped kitchen where the home demonstration agent shows farm women how to cook meals that make mouths water, and shows them also how to stretch the family budget. When the AAA committeeman goes in there to get anything, he always turns off the lights before leaving. If he is asked why, he will answer, "Well, why not turn 'em out? We pay taxes, and the county pays its light bills out of the taxes. The smaller the light bill, the further our tax money goes."

The Floyd County Agricultural Planning Committee is unusually large. It has 69 members, of whom 36 are farmers, 15 farm women, and 18 representatives of state and Federal agencies. When a reporter went into the county to investigate, he emerged with the observation that the planning committee "had had its finger in every Floyd County pie of the last few years." Time after time, the reporter continued, when some farmer would start to tell about something that had happened, he would start off by saying, "The planning committee looked things over and decided that something should be done."

The chairman of the planning committee explained it this way: "Our policy has been to encourage anyone who has a problem or suggestion to lay it before the committee. If the committee thinks something should be done, the matter is then referred to a subcommittee for careful study. If the subcommittee can handle the matter itself, it does, and reports its action to the committee leader. If, on the other hand, it needs the help of the entire committee, it asks for help, and gets it."

Here are some of the results of the planning committee's work:

On its recommendation, the Floyd County Soil Conservation District was formed. A subcommittee of the county planning committee even worked out a system of procedures for the supervisors when the board was set up to administer the district.

At the planning committee's suggestion, the commissioners' court bought a Diesel-powered maintainer and turned it over to the district.

As a result of the committee's interest in cooperation, a co-op food locker plant was opened one year. The next year it handled more than 100,000 pounds of meat. A co-op cream station is run in connection with the plant.

A Rural Electrification Administration project was organized with the planning committee's support, and now serves some 1000 farms in Floyd and neighboring counties.

Floyd County takes a big part in the South Plains One-Variety Cotton Improvement and Marketing Program, and naturally the planning committee was interested in that, too. Those who participate agree to plant only certain kinds of cotton, and samples of the cotton are graded by the United States Department of Agriculture, Agricultural Marketing Administration. Floyd County contributed more than 6000 bales in 1940, and even more the next year.

The planning has encouraged Floyd County farmers to carry on soil-building demonstrations in cooperation with the Texas Extension Service and the Tennessee Valley Authority. An egg-marketing association holds monthly meetings to study how to produce the best possible eggs and a wool-marketing association has been organized and

has handled as much as 450,000 pounds of wool in one year.

About 1000 farmers gather each spring for an irrigation school, at which they hear experts on the subject. Last year the school branched out into livestock feeding. The chairman of the planning committee says it promises to develop into a short course for farmers along the lines of that given at the state agricultural college, and the committee naturally is sympathetic.

Experiments are being conducted in sugar-beet production. So far tests are on a small scale, but sugar beets show promise. And the committee's recommendations helped to get a special freight rate for Floyd County beets.

Floyd County's flourishing Farm Security Administration tenant purchase program received its start through the interest of the county planning committee.

A subcommittee was appointed to study the possibilities of starting a cooperative hospital. The group visited the cooperative hospital in a nearby county. Much impressed with the report of the group, the committee completed plans for the organization of the hospital.

It should be remembered that these are instances of action growing out of the study and recommendations of the planning committee. Action itself is up to groups other than planning groups, for the latter are not set up to do operating or administrative jobs.

### *200,000 Farm People Help Plan Ahead*

Ask a Floyd County farmer why it is that the people there work together, and buy and sell together, and plan together so well. He'll probably say, as at least one farmer did, "I reckon we're just naturally smarter than other

people." Perhaps Floyd County *is* "just naturally smarter." But if that is so, it follows that a lot of other counties are naturally smarter too. For farmers in hundreds of other counties have learned what it means to work and plan together since that day in 1938 when the spokesmen of the Department of Agriculture sat down with the spokesmen of the Land-Grant Colleges and wrote the Mt. Weather Agreement. In these three years, enough water has flowed over the dam to sink a minor fleet—enough to show us, at any rate, what the average man can do if given half a chance.

For almost 200,000 average men and women were given a chance. A chance to tell their government what they thought was wrong with their country, their state, their county, their community, and their neighborhood. A chance to see some of these wrongs righted. A chance to sit around a table with the experts, or go calling with them from farm to farm, and exchange what the one knows for what the other knows. A chance, above all, to make their own mistakes, and to learn by them.

These 200,000 farm men and women in early 1942 represented the non-official membership of state, county, and community agricultural planning committees. They came from 47 states and 1891 counties—nearly two-thirds of the agricultural counties in the nation. They came from some pretty prosperous farms, and they came from some pretty tumble-down ones. They met once a week, or once a month, or sometimes only once in every several months to talk, and draw maps, and make plans, and see their plans through. The 47 State Agricultural Planning Committees had a total membership, at last count, of more than 1300, and just about half were farm men and women.

Fewer than 400 were Federal representatives; the rest were from state or local agencies. Then there were 1800 county and 10,000 community committees active during the year leading up to Pearl Harbor, made up mostly of farm men and women. They held nearly 27,000 meetings.

The county planning committee has been the heart of the grass-roots planning experiment. With the help of the community committees, each county committee has subdivided maps of the county into a number of areas according to the use made of the land. The important characteristics of each area have been described; the land in each of the areas has been classified in terms of present and proposed uses; and the adjustments in land use and agricultural practices needed in each area have been described. The county committee has then recommended the policies or measures that will help to bring about these changes.

Planning may become merely pointless discussion, however, unless the plans are put to work. The most important yardstick to use in judging the results of three years of grass-roots planning is this: What happened to the plans after the planning committees made them?

Almost any state will serve in answering the question. Say New Mexico; Eddy County, New Mexico, to be exact. All the farm men and women of the county agricultural planning committee were elected by the people of their community at open community meetings. All except one committeeman are married. Two committee members are husband and wife. Members range in age from 34 to 64. One has completed only five years of grade school; another has completed four years of college. All but one have completed grade school; ten have finished high school; six have had some college study.



How do they earn their living? Four are livestock ranchers; four combine livestock ranching and crop farming; nine are farmers; and one lone member is a pharmacist. Fourteen committeemen have cars; ten have access to a telephone. Only six have electricity in their homes. Some live only a stone's throw from the meeting place, but one lives as far away as 60 miles.

These, then, are the farm people who are members of a planning committee. Sitting with them, of course, are local representatives of such agencies as the Extension Service, Farm Security Administration, Agricultural Adjustment Administration, Forest Service, Grazing Service, Reclamation Bureau, Biological Survey, Rural Electrification Administration, Public Roads Administration, and the county school board. The only reason for choosing this particular committee rather than any other committee is that a sociologist happened to go to one of their meetings and ask them these questions. The variety of answers in this one community gives the key to the variety of plans suggested by each committee. Multiply this committee by two thousand, and you will have some idea of the variety of accomplishments of planning committees the country over during the last three years. The accomplishments of planning committees may be discussed under a number of headings. They could be considered geographically. There is the Pacific Northwest, for instance, where a planning committee in the state of Washington decided that farms in certain areas should be larger, and got the Farm Security Administration to make loans for clearing stump land for that purpose. In a certain county in Alabama where 75 per cent of the farmers were tenants—and most of these had only spoken agreements from

year to year with their landlords,—the planning committee has done much to encourage the use of written leases, as well as to set more tenants on the road to purchasing their own farms. In a New Hampshire County the planning committee undertook a ten-year program to bring about pasture improvement, which they believed to be their principal problem.

There would be differences, of course, between the recommendations of committees in the logging country of the Northwest, committees in the deep South, and committees at the tip of New England, where five generations of Yankee farmers have made their living without help from the rest of the world. But these differences would merely reflect the differences between people living the length and breadth of our long, broad land: they would throw more light on the way people live than on the way the planning process has worked out.

What about dividing the accomplishments of planning committees by the subject matter with which they deal? Some deal with conserving natural resources, others with making farm family life healthier and happier. Some committees were concerned with helping to locate and develop public services, while others gave attention to improving educational opportunities for rural people. And as the dark clouds of war began to gather and the storm burst in all its fury, planning committees turned their thoughts and energies toward winning the war and winning the peace.

We might start with natural resources, and what planning committees have done to conserve them. Out in Kootenai County, Idaho, for example, most of the best farmland is owned by Indians but farmed by white people. Their problems are erosion, lack of fertility, the presence

of noxious weeds. The local planning committee got the Soil Conservation Service to draw up plans for conserving these farms, and the Bureau of Indian Affairs has since included these plans in the leases for the land.

Again: Planning committees helped to organize soil-conservation districts in Yell County, Arkansas; De Baca County, New Mexico; Tillamook County, Oregon; Box Elder County, Utah; Elbert County, Colorado; and Culpeper County, Virginia. In Quay County, New Mexico, and Marshall County, South Dakota, the boundaries of existing districts were extended after planning committees had stepped in. The part played by the planning committees has varied from place to place, but in all these counties the committees have studied the erosion problem and reported that the districts offered one means of encouraging soil conservation. Besides, they have often arranged public meetings to tell the people of the county what could be done about their worn-out soil, and members of planning committees have called from house to house to circulate petitions for the formation of districts.

Then there are instances of action to make farm life healthier and happier. That is a broad field, but here are some of the things that might be classed in it: The planning committee in Columbia County, Florida, began a campaign which resulted in the building of several community recreation centers. The Millard County, Utah, committee did much to stimulate community pride when it sponsored a similar campaign to make the county more attractive. In a number of New Mexico counties, the Farm Security Administration took many farmers off Work Projects Administration rolls in line with planning-committee suggestions. Instead of direct relief, which did nothing to improve the living conditions of the farmers, the

Farm Security Administration offered these farmers small payments in return for bettering their farms and homes.

A whole community in a submarginal area in Transylvania County, North Carolina, became a better place to live in through the work of the county committee there. The Tennessee Valley Authority, in cooperation with the Extension Service, approved the area for a watershed demonstration, while the Farm Security Administration agreed to make loans and grants for pasture improvement, buying foundation herds, and improving living conditions.

There are a good many examples on record of what planning committees have done in the way of helping to locate and develop public services. Delta County, Colorado, affords one of the best. The Delta County Committee spent much of its time and attention on the subject of public roads. It asked the various community committees to map for their areas a road system which they felt would best serve their community needs. They were told to forget existing road systems, discard personal likes and dislikes, and lay out a road system that would best get people to town and market, to churches, schools, to social centers and other gathering places.

After each of the communities had finished its map, the county committee called a meeting to which it invited representatives of each community, the county commissioners, the State Highway Department, the Public Roads Administration, and the Forest Service. The representative of each agency then pointed out the roads which were eligible for improvement with funds from that particular agency. Then the community committees met again to select a final plan in view of what they thought *should* be done, and what *could* be done with existing funds.

The committees learned as they worked. They learned

that several thousand dollars had been spent by the county to maintain a road serving only one ranch. They learned that the county had also spent a considerable sum to gravel a road which had then remained unused, and is now closed. By comparing road maps with maps showing good and bad soils, they learned which roads should be abandoned because they ran through areas not fit to farm.

Now the county committee met again to put all the community maps together. Nearly everyone was there—people from the Chamber of Commerce, civic clubs, and service organizations. The State Highway Department representative came, and so did state legislators representing Delta County. The finished plan was then handed over to every agency that spent money on Delta County roads, and they will now be in a position to work together over the years in a united program for the good of all.

The road system adopted by the committee relieved Delta County of responsibility for road construction and maintenance on 297.3 miles without seriously affecting any farmer or rancher. The county had previously been trying to service 811.9 miles of roads, with a road and bridge fund of only \$115,000 yearly. The county commissioners adopted the plan at once. Other changes, of course, will take one year, or five years, or even ten years.

Meantime, the Delta County Planning Committee is reviewing school bus and mail routes. Working with the board of education, the committee is seeing that school buses are being rerouted for better service. And working with postal authorities, mail routes are being changed to give prompter mail deliveries.

If the state or Federal governments were to reroute school buses or mail deliveries without first attempting to

obtain the ideas of those affected by the changes, the local people might indulge in the great American privilege of grumbling. But here they said how it ought to be done, requiring their children to walk a half-mile to the bus line in some instances, where they had not walked more than a few steps before; perhaps themselves walking some distance to their rural free delivery mail-box.

And that is not all. The women on the county and community committees have their own pet project—roadside development. The State Forester had available thousands of trees for a nominal price, in some cases as low as 15 cents a tree. The State Highway Department had a landscape engineer who would cooperate with them. The local property owners contributed small strips of land; and the state and county highway departments contributed the necessary grading and approaches. The women found that civic pride enabled them to do the rest.

Delta County is just one example. Time and again the Public Roads Administration and State Highway Departments have used the land-classification maps drawn up by planning committees to help decide where roads should be built or should not be built, and how much traffic each road is likely to carry in the future. Three farm-to-market roads have been built in Kaufman County, Texas, and one in Etowah County, Alabama, largely as a result of the efforts of county committees. Planning committees in Brown, Harrison, Owen, Monroe, and Martin Counties, Indiana, reported that their area-classification maps have been used by Rural Electrification Administration committeemen in locating and extending rural electrification lines. Acting upon recommendations of the committees in Worcester and Wicomico Counties, Maryland, the com-

missioners of each county set aside \$10,000 for drainage purposes. The state supplied an added \$30,000 for the work, and the Federal Government provided a CCC camp to help drain the land. The lakes and streams of Otsego County, Michigan, became handier to the people when the Michigan Department of Conservation agreed to buy land there for recreational purposes. It asked the county planning committee to recommend what land should be purchased.

The Mississippi State Forest Commission agreed to change the location of a proposed State Forest to a new site, after the planning committee decided an original choice was unsuited to agriculture. The people in Barton County, Missouri, were the happy recipients of more public recreational grounds when the State Conservation Commission bought 11,500 acres of coal strip pits to be reforested, and stocked the water-holes in the area with fish. This they did upon the recommendation of the State Planning Committee. The State Conservation Commission named a farmer member of the state committee from Barton County as its agent in buying the land.

Planning committees have wrinkled their brows over the problems of rural education. In many Iowa and Indiana counties, for instance, the spending of money for new schools has been guided by planning committees, so that what happened in one community there will not happen again. That community built a \$150,000 school only to learn, when the planning committee finished its land-classification map, that farming in the area in which the school was located was going downhill, and the school could not be properly supported. Then, too, planning committees have advised on problems connected with many extension

programs. Their recommendations have guided much of the county agents' work. As a county agent of an Ohio county put it, the planning committee "has already laid out enough constructive work to keep me busy for the next 20 years." In another county in the same state, the agricultural teacher built an adult agricultural course around the land-use map, descriptions, and recommendations of the county committee.

### *Translating Ideas into Bulldozers and Peaches*

Classifying the doings of planning committees by the subjects with which they deal, as we have seen, is one way to grasp something of the diversity of the accomplishments. But perhaps the most useful way of all to group the fruit of the planning process is by the simple expedient of asking how the plans were translated into action? Did the local farmers do the job alone? Did they do it with the aid of state or local groups? Did they require the help of Federal agencies? Or perhaps all these forces had to put their shoulders to the wheel together in order to make the plans work?

Let us begin with the things that farmers have been able to do themselves, either by each farmer working alone or by a group getting together. Buying clubs were formed in several counties in Arkansas for the purchase of farm supplies and livestock. In Nebraska, community committees were set up for the purpose of cooperative tree planting. In Uintah and Juab Counties, Utah, planning committees were active in starting cooperative sawmills, which allow farmers there to spend their spare time getting lumber for their own use.

The planning committee of Pend Oreille County, Wash-



ington, arranged to rent a privately owned bulldozer, which made land clearing much cheaper than under the hand methods used before. In Dona Ana County, New Mexico, the committee felt that the way home-grown food was being stored on the farms there was so bad that the health of the community was in danger. With the committee's help the farmers joined together to finance a cold-storage locker plant which now serves a large area in the southern part of the county, as well as in an adjoining Texas county.

Community planning committees represented the growers of Mesa County, Colorado, in working out a successful plan for marketing peaches. Through this plan, 2500 cars—or more than a million bushels of fruit—were sold. Out of their efforts grew a state law allowing closer cooperation between state and Federal officials on marketing problems; a publicity program to increase the consumption of Colorado peaches; and closer inspection of all peaches shipped from the valley.

A good many suggestions of planning committees have been carried out by the farmers themselves, as we have seen. But many others required the help of state or local bodies. The county commissioners in Beltrami, Hubbard, Koochiching, Carlton, and Lake-of-the-Woods Counties, Minnesota, decided not to offer for sale county-owned land that county and community planning committees classed as unsuited for agriculture. Planning committees played an important role in aiding the Michigan State Conservation Department to reach the decision not to sell poor land in Mason County, as well as in making similar decisions of the commissioners in Carbon County, Utah; Bowman County, North Dakota; and Spokane County,

Washington. State agencies in Minnesota and Arkansas asked the planning committees there for information and advice in deciding which parcels of publicly owned land should be kept in public hands and which should be returned to private ownership.

In Bowman County, North Dakota, and Corson County, South Dakota, the commissioners classified county-owned range land, blocked it into units, and leased it for long terms, at the suggestion of the county committees. A referendum held in Menominee County, Michigan, endorsed rural zoning, but the drafting and passing of the ordinance was held up until the county committee finished classifying the land. The ordinance in Marinette County, Wisconsin, was changed in light of the planning committee's report to include in restricted zones more land unsuited to agriculture.

In Sargent County, North Dakota, the planning committee helped the county officials to adjust land values for tax purposes to conform to what the land was able to produce. In seven counties in Texas, Kansas, and Arizona, county planning committees cooperated with state and local agencies in combating grasshoppers. On the basis of recommendations made by county committees, full-time weed commissioners have been appointed in three Iowa counties. Four other Iowa counties enlarged their weed-control programs to include buying weed-control equipment at the suggestion of planning committees.

A great many proposals made by planning committees, however, could not be solved at either the local or the state level. That meant that the Federal Government was asked to step in and help. Sometimes planning committees have helped adapt government programs to local conditions

through their suggestions; at other times, they have proposed ways to make agricultural programs work together smoothly.

For example: In almost every county where the planning committee finished classifying the land, the rural rehabilitation supervisor used the maps, and the descriptions and recommendations that go with them, as guides in making new loans to needy farmers. In Newberry County, South Carolina, the Farm Security Administration followed the suggestion of the planning committee to set up families on farms of at least two-mule size. The same agency and the Soil Conservation Service agreed to provide for livestock in their farm plans for that county. In many of the counties where the tenant purchase program was operating, the Farm Security Administration made wide use of the land-classification maps prepared by the planning committees in selecting and appraising farms on which loans should or should not be made to tenants.

In Greene County, Georgia, the Soil Conservation Service bought land in those areas which the county planning committee named as unsuited for farming. Worrying the farmers in Coos County, New Hampshire, was the problem of woodland pastures that were neither good grass nor good woodland. The planning committee suggested a way to get better pasture or less acreage, and to put the rest of the former woodland pasture under a managed woodland program. The AAA agreed to adjust its program to make this possible. And the idea spread like good news to a number of surrounding counties.

In many counties, working committees have been set up by planning committees to figure out ways and means by which all the agricultural programs in the county could

best work together. Such committees usually included representatives of the various public agencies, and either the chairman or one or two other farmer members of the committee. Even in counties where such committees were not set up, planning committees succeeded in drawing agricultural programs closer together. For example, because of the planning committee's work in Okfuskee County, Oklahoma, the Agricultural Adjustment Administration gave the county rehabilitation supervisor a copy of its plan for the farm of each family being helped by the FSA, so that the supervisor was better able to set up his own plan for these families. In Lewis County, Virginia, the FSA agreed to finance farmers in ways that would help them cooperate in the work of the Soil Conservation Service and the AAA, as a result of the planning committee's proposal.

### *Toward Better Homes on the Range*

Many of the plans drawn up by planning committees could not be put to work by the farmers alone, or by local and state groups alone, or by the agencies of the Federal Government alone. It took the know-how of them all to translate some plans into action. The way Teton County, Montana, tackled one planning job, and the way the recommendations of the local committees went to work, will show how all the persons, agencies, and organizations of one county were mobilized through grass-roots planning.

The 1000 farmers in Teton County earn most of their living from about 160,000 acres of spring wheat, 120,000 head of sheep, and 20,000 head of cattle. Many of them came to Teton County from parts of the country where the rainfall was heavier. They farmed as they had learned

how to farm in another climate. They misused the land; and the land began to wear out. No single farmer was to blame for what happened, just as no single farmer could bring about the remedy. Group action was needed. So the farmers of Teton County elected three members in each community to form community agricultural planning committees, and set up a county committee composed of the chairmen of the community committees, together with representatives of county, state, and Federal agencies.

The community committees began with a map of each community; marked off the various areas according to how the land was being used; studied the problems in each area. Then each community committee sent the county committee its ideas as to how these problems might best be solved. The county committee rolled all the community committee proposals up into one county-wide package, and asked the community committees to give the farmers in each community a good look at this package at open meetings. The community committees jotted down any changes the neighborhood farmers thought should be made in the county-wide plan, and once again the county committee incorporated the features of the community committee reports in a report for the entire county. The State Agricultural Planning Committee and the Federal and state agencies interested were asked to look over the report, and to suggest ways and means by which they might help to carry out the recommendations. Then the county committee, together with representatives of agencies of the Department of Agriculture, took the suggestions of the various agencies and worked them together into a final report.

The county committee's report did two main things: It

said that land producing 7 bushels of wheat or less per acre per year was not fit to plow; and it mapped the specific location of all such land then being plowed. It turned out that there were 20,000 acres of such land under cultivation. The county committee asked that this land should be used for grazing only. But the committee noted that shifting 20,000 acres of plowland to grass raised many questions. How many people would be affected by taking this land out of crops? What could farmers do who were affected? Were the county and state governments leasing this land for crop production? Were owners of these lands who did not live in Teton County aware of how they should be used? What effect did agricultural credit have upon keeping these lands in crop production? The deeper the committee went, the more questions came to light.

Taking these and other questions into consideration, the county committee recommended—and the agencies and people involved proceeded to do—the following things: The Agricultural Conservation Committee of AAA urged that low-grade land be retired from cultivation and reseeded, did not allow any low-grade sodland to come into the AAA program as cropland, and took other steps. The Farm Security Administration agreed not to make loans for cropping low-grade plowland and grazing land. The Farm Credit Administration made a special point of the productivity of the land before lending money to farmers. The State Land Department frowned on breaking up low-grade farmland under its control, made every effort to get its low-grade farmland back to grass, and encouraged reseeded by charging a lower rental for reseeded land. Teton County officials began assessing at a higher rate low-grade lands that were being cultivated or broken up

for cropping. These are only a few of the related measures that were adopted.

### *Of School Buses, Doctors, and Migrants*

What happened in Teton County to put one plan to work also happened, with variations, in tens of scores of other counties throughout the country. Some of the proposals were simple; others were complex. Some were humble as a one-mule farm, while others were loaded with portent. The implications of some ended close to home, but the echoes of others can even now be heard beyond the distant horizons of any one county, or state, or region.

There is the homely little tale of how a group of parents in Boundary County arranged that their children could ride to school. It might be all right for grown-ups to wade through miles of snow in the blasts of a northern Idaho winter, they reasoned, but children going to and from school—that is another matter. The mothers and fathers of North Bench reasoned this way in the winter of 1941, as they had for many winters before, when they saw their youngsters, more than twenty of them, trudge off on the five-mile journey to school. What is more, they saw the school bus from Bonners Ferry pass their homes shortly afterward loaded with youngsters who, by accident of living in another community, were spared the long winter walk.

It did not make sense. The problem could be solved simply by redrawing lines between school districts, and then all the children could ride. But at repeated elections called for that purpose, the voters had refused to redraw the lines. This winter, however, was different from other winters because a community agricultural planning com-

mittee was born at a meeting of farm men and women at the North Bench Grange Hall.

The planning committee found that previous elections had been lost because the voters believed the change was being sought by a few who stood to gain certain private benefits. So they undertook an educational campaign to inform the people of the real need for the change. Neighborhood meetings were held in both North Bench and Bonners Ferry. The local newspaper helped. Letters were sent out by the hundreds. Then the committee rounded up the required number of signatures for a special election within the two school districts. Two months later, a large majority voted to permit the desired changes. And by arranging exchanges of taxable lands, the committee saw to it that the added costs to the Bonners Ferry school district were met. The whole thing did not cost the taxpayers in either district one cent more. Now the children of the North Bench district ride to school, and their parents know the value of planning.

A far cry from this humble story is the one that has to do with medical care. The problem of what to do about sickness among small farmers—and the omnipresent fact that people with little cash need more medical care than people with money to spare—had been troubling planning committees all along. In Culpeper County, Virginia, for instance, the planning committee proposed to work out a cooperative scheme for taking care of the medical needs of low-income farm families. But the members of the Culpeper committee and all the other committees that have been working on the idea, felt they did not have enough experience to bring their idea to life. They asked the Department of Agriculture to develop a specific program.



and this it did, not only in Virginia but elsewhere, for state and county planning committees in many parts of the South had become interested in the same problem. As a result of their recommendations, the Farm Security Administration agreed to furnish financial and technical assistance in setting up a few county medical care programs in which all farmers in the locality were eligible to participate.

The program was put up to the people in selected counties in twelve states. All except one of these counties expressed approval of the program, but several saw fit to turn it down for various reasons of practicability. In ten counties, however, funds were made available to the associations, and the program is under way.

The plan will work like this: A farmer with membership in the county association will pay 6 per cent of his net cash income from the preceding year to the medical association. For that, he will get medical care for himself and his family, hospitalization, drugs, and in some cases, dental care. The experts figure that the average cost of all services given to the farmer will run about \$50 for each family. But since most small farmers cannot afford to pay that much, the government is offering to pay the difference over and above what the small farmer will pay.

Here, then, is an idea that started in a few counties. It was a good idea, and an important one. It is packed with added meaning in times of war, when the health of every one of us is needed for victory. Any shortage of medical facilities required to keep the defenders of this nation and their families strong and alert weakens the war effort. Health is as essential as guns and tanks and planes for the men of the Army, the Navy, and the Air Corps.

The Federal Government stepped in at the request of the people in these counties. It drew up a plan. This plan was sent back to the counties that requested it, and to a few other counties, too. Those that wanted to adopt the plan did so, with the government supplying the required subsidy. If the experimental medical care program works out in these counties, it may spread to others. Low-cost medical care may eventually be the rule, and not the rare exception in all our rural counties. The better world we are fighting to build after the war has no room for sick bodies, any more than it has room for the sick minds of our enemies today.

Not all the suggestions of planning committees were as good as this one. Some were starry-eyed, or, stated another way, they would have reacted to the benefit of one county at the expense of other counties, even at the expense of the nation. This was more the case in the early days of grass-roots planning than it was later. And it is noteworthy that in most cases the committees that made such recommendations were quick to amend them when they saw the dynamite packed in their plans.

"Somewhere else" became the watchword for one sort of such recommendations around the Department of Agriculture. A member of the staff applied the words when he sat in on a meeting of a New England planning committee. One man rose to say that a lot of the land that ought to be in forest was being scratched at by farmers who could never make a go of it. The land was just not good enough. The farmers managed to remain, thanks to work and direct relief. And their presence frequently required roads to be kept clear and schools open that would not otherwise be needed. They should be rooted out, he said, and resettled

on land where a man had some chance to make a living. The speaker was clear on each point until he got to this one. But now he said that the people from the poor land would have to be taken care of *somewhere else*. From there on he was vague.

A month later several men from the Department of Agriculture were listening to a report of county planning activities, this time at the other end of the country, in San Joaquin Valley. The county agent was talking. There were too many farmers in the county. Most of the farms were too small to return to their farmers the level of living they should have. Someone asked the county agent what the committee had decided should be done with those who would have to quit farming. They would have to be taken care of *somewhere else*, he replied.

A little later these same men from the Department listened to the report of a planning committee in a Great Plains county. Once more there were too many farmers in the county, it was pointed out. Estimates were that to live as they felt they should be living, the farmers in the county would have to have farms nearly twice the size of the present county average. Again the question came up of where the extra farmers could find a chance to make a living, and again the answer was *somewhere else*.

Unfortunately, as the planning committees soon realized, one county's "somewhere else" would be another county's burden. They came to see that the migratory labor camps of California were, for example, the "somewhere else" of Dust Bowl counties. They came to think, in the counties, on a national scale. They learned to see the relationship between problems in their county and the problems of the nation as a whole. Out of their efforts

came newer and better plans—plans that were in harmony with the welfare of their states and their regions and their country as well. Now, in the midst of war there is work for all. But with the end of war, inevitably, the *somewhere else* problem will arise again.

### *The Citizen and Public Responsibility*

This is how one county committee approved a recommendation that involved certain disadvantages for the nation as a whole, and how they came to realize their mistake. The county: Young County, Texas. The recommendation: that the cotton and wheat acreage allotments for each farm be combined and planted to these crops in such proportion as the producer may wish.

In its comments and suggestions on the report of the Young County Committee, the Department of Agriculture pointed out that this proposal might help individual farmers in certain counties for the time being. But in the long run, it was said that acreage planted to one of the special allotments might expand at the expense of another product. We might get more than we need of one thing, and less than we need of another. Then, too, it would be difficult to set and administer marketing quotas under such a system.

The Young County Planning Committee was able to see the implications of its proposal. Its members had learned a lesson in neighborliness on the large scale, and that the responsibility that cloaks them as members of a particular planning committee is more than county-wide.

This consciousness of public responsibility on the part of members of planning committees was one of the brightest signs to come out of grass-roots planning. Committee

members were aware that they were serving the public, and they grew even more aware of the fact as their work progressed. When the Arkansas State Agricultural Planning Committee recommended eventual state administration of all the road repair and construction work now in the hands of the counties, the proposal hit the front pages of nearly every newspaper in the state. Individual members of the committee were flooded with letters asking them to act this way or that on the proposal. What the folks back home thought of their actions became more than a hypothetical matter to the farmer members of the committee.

In Mississippi, there is a dramatic story of how the members of one county planning committee felt the full impact of their responsibility. This committee had been studying the system of tax assessments in the county. As a result of their investigations, they decided the assessment procedure needed to be changed. They also found that certain loopholes in the system allowed a number of local farmers to evade paying taxes. Result: a hearing was held at which members of the planning committee were called to testify. Under oath, they told what they had found about tax evasion. The upshot of the whole thing was the development of a better system of assessments for the county, as well as the adjustment of many previous tax payments.

But if the members of planning committees felt a sense of responsibility to the people in times of peace, that feeling was deeply underlined as war drew near. Farm men and women elected by their fellow men to serve on planning committees began wrestling with the changes coming to rural America as a result of defense and war

activities as early as 1940. They realized that farm people are not only fighting for production, but also are making adjustments to meet endless other war requirements of the nation.

As December 7, 1941, approached, more and more of the accomplishments of planning committees were in the line of national defense. Decentralization of war industries, careful planning of military food requirements, more Federal help for public services in areas where people were crowding in to man war industries, long-range planning of war housing, better ways to market farm products—these and other subjects inspired planning committees to action.

The biggest single contribution of the State Agricultural Planning Committees during the year immediately preceding our entry into the war was the development of a broad program of agricultural changes to aid in the defense effort and meet the impacts of war. In January, 1941, the Secretary of Agriculture asked each state committee to answer these questions:

How could agriculture best contribute to national defense and national unity?

How could the benefits resulting from the defense effort be used to bring about needed changes in farming, forestry, and rural living and to place agriculture in a stronger spot, economically and socially?

How could unwise types of land use be prevented?

Working without pay, the farmer members of state committees, in cooperation with representatives of the Department of Agriculture and the state agricultural colleges, developed their programs within a period of one to six months. During June, seven conferences were held

in different parts of the country to summarize these programs on a regional basis. Then a national summary was prepared under the title "Agriculture's Plans to Aid in Defense and Meet the Impacts of War."

From these state programs came a reservoir of suggestions that have since seen action on many agricultural fronts: suggestions as to how local farmers might help state and Federal agencies to supply facts on housing and labor needed by war agencies; suggestions as to priorities and price-control policies, particularly in regard to farm machinery, nitrogenous fertilizer, and insecticides; suggestions as to how to help farm families having to move from areas needed for war industries or military activities.

The states cried as one for a unified national education program on health and nutrition. Health, they urged, should be part of our first line of defense. Specifically, they suggested such measures as more hot lunches for school children, more consumer education, more Agricultural Adjustment Administration benefit payments for home food practices, and better medical services for rural communities.

Nearly every state committee asked for more vocational guidance and training programs for rural youth. They also wanted larger Federal grants-in-aid for all public educational purposes so that rural children could have the same kind of education that city children do. Many states thought farmers ought to be told more about their part in the war, which had not yet reached our soils.

Not a few states were alarmed at the increased fire hazards and wasteful harvesting practices that followed in the wake of the need for more lumber for defense activities. Other states thought a much larger portion of the

Agricultural Adjustment Administration's benefit payments should be used to encourage adoption of conservation practices. It was recognized that the pressure of good livestock prices and current feed supplies might lead to overstocking and overgrazing of range lands. To offset this, the committees laid stress on a policy of managing ranges to assure sustained yield.

Echoing Secretary of Agriculture Wickard's words that food will win the war and write the peace, the state committees proposed the growing of more food by getting more out of each animal raised and each acre of cropland cultivated wherever possible, rather than by establishing new herds or developing new cropland. And where increased acres are needed, they warned, such acres should be used as are suitable for agriculture.

"Some form of price guarantee or support," with the guarantees or supports moving upward as prices paid by farmers move upward, was recommended. Expansion of old transportation facilities and development of new ones were urged to forestall the possibility of bottle-necks in shipping. More trade within the Western Hemisphere was suggested by many committees as a means of strengthening what has come to be called Hemispheric Solidarity.

Looking ahead to the world after the war, the state committees set forth three lines of activity which they believed would make it easier to pass from war to peace. First: A rural works program to take care of rural unemployment and underemployment, at the same time meeting the highway, forestry, housing, hospitalization, educational, and recreational needs of rural life. Second: Curbing of uneconomic expansion, undue speculation in land values by increasing the efficiency of the livestock,



acres, and machinery now available; and by shifting from surplus or export crops to feed and food crops. Third: By shaping the future of American agriculture through such measures as rural zoning, public acquisition of sub-marginal and forest lands, more vocational guidance and training for rural youth, and continued migration to cities from rural areas that have too many farmers.

Grass-roots planning did not even stop to catch its breath when these reports were handed to the Secretary of Agriculture. There was too much to do. There was, for instance, the problem of farm labor, growing knottier and knottier every day.

Farm labor subcommittees of state agricultural planning committees are organized in nearly all the states. County agricultural planning committees in all sections of the country set up farm labor subcommittees, too. Their work has varied, but all of them have tried to get more farmers and farm laborers to cooperate with the public employment services in the states.

Farm labor subcommittees in the counties passed on facts to local selective service boards—facts about how much farm labor was needed, and facts about how many workers were on hand. This helped the boards judge who should be deferred. Subcommittees in many counties worked out plans for putting the needed number of workers in the spots where they would be needed, at the time that they would be needed to harvest the 1942 crops. Many subcommittees made efforts to see that farm workers had clean, decent, healthful living quarters: sound houses for those who live in the area, and pleasant camps for those who come in to work for the season.

But farm labor itself is part and parcel of a larger pic-

ture. Immediately upon perceiving that an unprecedented industrial expansion would be called for by the national defense program, the Department of Agriculture realized that the new industrial plants, if located in areas where there appeared to be too many people, would help solve many distressing problems in agriculture, and at the same time such location would guarantee ample supplies of labor for defense plants.

The conditions of modern aerial warfare, and the attendant desirability of avoiding too great concentration of industrial plants in centralized areas accessible to bombing planes, contributed to the Department's belief that a large number of these industries might profitably be located in rural and semi-rural areas. These conclusions were discussed with officials of various war agencies and a basic understanding was reached.

It has long been known that there are more people in some rural regions than the land can support. This applies particularly to the Appalachian highlands, large sections of the cotton belt, the Lake States cut-over areas, the Great Plains, and the Southwest. These are the poorest agricultural areas in the nation, the areas where more youngsters grow up in each family, the areas with most limited land resources, the areas with fewest opportunities for jobs off the farm, and except in the Appalachians and the Great Lakes cut-over, the areas hardest hit by the loss of foreign markets. Problems of income, housing, and education are particularly acute there. In the 1930's, people flowed into these regions because they could find no jobs in the cities. Thus, in these areas the nation possessed a giant reservoir of labor. Best use of this man-power is a milestone on the road to victory.

In the early days of the defense emergency, it was impossible to get immediate production of guns and tanks and planes by locating new industries in agricultural areas. Many plants, therefore, were placed in established industrial sections, pending arrangements for building plants in rural areas. Since late 1940, a number of munitions plants have moved into the areas where there were more men than the soil could support. These plants are now producing full-blast for war, and at the same time helping to meet the long-time needs of agriculture. The facilities of these plants, necessary in war, also will prove useful to the areas after the war, because they can produce such needed products as fertilizer.

Many grass-roots planning committees have been aggressive in developing plans and taking action to solve knotty problems that trailed defense industries and military establishments into rural areas. They have helped to guide army officials to buy suitable sites. They have made inventories of how much labor was available. They have helped to relocate farm families who have had to move, planned where to build roofs to put over the workers' heads, and worked out ways that growers could supply enough food for nearby army camps.

A few examples go a long way toward showing what farm men and women have done in areas of war activity. Military considerations forbid giving the exact place that each example occurred, but the state or region is given in all cases cited below.

Two large war industries—a powder plant and bag-loading plant—have been constructed in one southern state since October, 1940, involving use of land in four counties. Thousands of construction workers moved into

the area when building started. It is estimated that about 9000 people will be employed regularly in these industries throughout the war.

In the communities and on the farms throughout the area, vast changes have taken place. A flood of money has poured in. Opportunities to get jobs in industry knocked at the very doors of farm boys and girls and farm workers. Home markets for eggs, milk, vegetables, and other farm products have become realities. To meet the changed conditions, farmers have made changes in land use, and shifted to new crops to supply the new demands. Many adjustments also have had to be made in school facilities, roads, utilities, governmental services, housing, and every other aspect of rural community life.

These rural communities overnight have become parts of an industrial center. The sum total of the adjustments is a testimonial to the American capacity to act, and act quickly, when the need arises. Many people and agencies have helped, of course, but it is significant that the farm people took a very large part in planning the adjustments.

Farmers helped in this planning from the start. In October, 1940, the National Defense Advisory Commission asked the Department of Agriculture for help in getting facts of many kinds about the area. This request was handed over to the State Agricultural Planning Committee, working with Federal and state agricultural workers.

The commission needed facts about housing available for the new workers in the area, the number of new houses that would have to be built, and where the new houses should be situated. It also wished to learn how many people in the area would be available for employment in the new industries.

Local farmers leaped to action. Plans for surveys on housing and labor were mapped out by all members of the State Agricultural Planning Committee on November 4. As a result, County Boards of Agriculture were immediately organized in three counties comprising the areas most affected by the defense projects. Later, community agricultural planning committees were formed in 34 communities in the area, including representative farm people from 188 smaller neighborhoods. Members of the committees included 444 farm men and women, as well as representatives of state and Federal agencies.

The housing and labor surveys were completed in four days. It took just that long for farmer members of these groups to interview more than 6900 farm families. Of this number, they found 2636 families living in houses that were too small, or too run-down, or not good enough in other important ways. If such families lived on suitable land near the new plant sites, the owners were asked whether they would permit the government to construct new houses on their land. If the houses were built, it was explained, they would be for lease to defense workers during the war emergency and for sale to the land-owners after the plants close down or curtail operations. Nearly 1000 eligible farm-owners said yes, they would be willing.

The agricultural planning committees' recommendations on housing, as submitted to the National Defense Advisory Commission, suggested that about 1000 houses be built in the area. Suggested sites for these houses, some in the towns and some on farms, were pointed out. The committees held that some of the new houses should be built on farms within 25 miles of the plants. This was so that there would be no "ghost towns" after the war. The re-

port also showed how many of the new houses could be absorbed by nearby towns.

The facts about manpower collected by the planning committees showed that a large supply of workers was available on nearby farms for use in the defense plants. On the basis of this information, the planning committees have been working with the U. S. Employment Service and other agencies to place these rural people in jobs at the plants.

Acting on the housing recommendations, the Farm Security Administration has built 70 defense houses on farms in the area. Authorization for construction of 200 houses was given the Farm Security Administration by the Federal Works Agency. The rest of the 200 houses were built in nearby towns.

War hit another southern state late in 1940 with a bang. Near one town in the state, two huge plants were started—an ordnance plant and a bag-loading plant for powder. Near another town, work began on an ammunition depot, and the adjacent army camp undertook a substantial construction program. To boot, the Army bought even more land for a firing range and maneuver grounds. At a third town, a new shell-forging plant was started, and a new shell-loading plant was planned in still another place. Altogether, 11 rural counties were waist-deep in the quicksand of war.

A single one of these industries, the powder plant, was scheduled to provide construction jobs for 16,000 workers before the end of the year. Thousands of workers were required by the other plants, too. About \$75,000,000 was paid out in one year for the construction work alone, and the industries are expected to furnish a new payroll of

about \$1,000,000 per month. When it is realized that the 1940 agricultural income for the entire state was some \$115,000,000, you get some idea of what this war program meant to a handful of rural counties.

The National Defense Advisory Commission in January, 1941, called upon the Department of Agriculture, for facts, facts, facts. This request, relayed to the State Agricultural Planning Committee, asked especially for information on housing and labor. The need for this information was conveyed to the county and community agricultural planning committees in the twelve counties in the project area. Then the wheels began to turn. In all, 1748 farm people, members of county and community committees, got the facts by asking questions of their neighbors. They took a week to do it, and within two weeks the facts were in the hands of the National Defense Advisory Commission.

Besides rooting out facts on housing needs and labor supply, as the farm people in the preceding example also did, the committees gathered facts on other subjects of interest to the planning committees in the long pull. They found out about the composition of families in the area, the color of the people, the part each family took in community activities. They discovered the acreage in individual farms, acreage in crops, normal yields, livestock numbers, the extent to which a live-at-home program was followed. They asked about the condition of the family dwellings, and the presence of home conveniences. They learned how many people were tenants, and how often they moved. Information was gathered as to how much schooling each rural person had, and the non-farm experience of people more than seventeen years old.

In cases when the interviewer thought the dwelling on the farm to be inadequate, he decided whether the farm unit was large enough to support a family and whether the farm was located on or near an all-weather road leading to one of the defense plants. If the answer to these questions was yes, he visited the owner of the land to ask whether he would be interested in leasing an acre or two to the government as a site for a defense worker's house. It was explained that the new house, if erected, would be occupied by the family of a defense-plant worker and that, after the emergency was past, the house could be purchased by the land-owner. The new house would then replace the present inadequate dwelling.

The rural housing survey covered 24,723 farm families. Of the people interviewed, 16,429 families were found to be living in houses classed as inadequate, and 3253 of these were on farms that the committees recommended as sites for building new defense houses. The recommended sites for defense housing on farms in the five counties most immediately affected by the defense activities were distributed county by county. They were also divided according to the proposed occupants—a specified number for colored operators, farm laborers, sharecropper families, and renters, and the rest for owners. Along with the rural housing survey, a twin survey was carried on in the towns and cities of the area. The towns asked that 1000 new houses be situated within their limits, and the number to be built in each town was specified.

In the labor-supply survey, 22,079 farm people—nearly one person for each family interviewed—said they would be interested in jobs off their farms. Of those interested in such work, 16,455 were men and 5624 were women.



As he handed the facts up to Washington officials, the chairman of the State Agricultural Planning Committee pointed out that this work was but a sample of what was to come in the way of grass-roots planning in the twelve counties of the area. Information like this, he explained, is needed to help the committees develop plans for using the money that is flowing into the pockets of the farmers to retire farm debts, to improve farm homes and buildings, to conserve the land, and to build up the physical fitness of the people. It is needed to develop plans for adjustments in the production of fruits, vegetables, livestock, dairy products, and poultry, to feed all the new people who have poured into the area. Above all, facts like these will help the committees plan ahead to lessen the shock that will come when the war is over.

Let us skip to the state of Kentucky for our next example. A publication of the Department of Agriculture, *Land Policy Review*, tells it this way:

"The time: January 1942. The place: 70,000 acres of land in Kentucky. Five hundred farm families are living on the land. You can hear the snort of the tractor.

"Now it's February. The place is the same. But on the land where 500 farm families scratched a living, thousands of soldiers are engaged in drills and maneuvers. You can hear them shooting.

"The area has been acquired by the War Department.

"What happened to these 500 farm families? Where did they go? Who helped the needy ones move? Where did they store their equipment and supplies? How did they find new farms? What about the sick and infirm among them?

"Enter agricultural planning. Under the leadership of

the Bureau of Agricultural Economics, representatives of 15 State, Federal, and private agencies met in Lexington to map plans to help those farm families. Each agency promised to do its share, pending the time that the dislocated families are paid for the land and buildings and crops. And hard on the heels of their pledges, each agency rolled up its sleeves and went to work.

"The State Agricultural Extension Service surveyed the area throughout the State for all farms and homes to which the families could move—temporarily or permanently. They also made a survey of farmers who wanted tenants or sharecroppers and set up a file which was available to all the families. The Farm Credit Administration offered to appraise farms which the families were interested in buying.

"The Farm Security Administration, together with local welfare agencies, made grants and loans to the neediest families. The U. S. Forest Service made a number of houses available to the farmers. The Work Projects Administration offered to build tent platforms if they were needed.

"A concerted effort was made to obtain at fair prices all types of vehicles needed for moving. The Employment Service undertook to find farm work for those who wanted it and to locate jobs as war workers in nearby cities for those who preferred them. The Red Cross helped to move the sick and infirm people from the area.

"To boot, all these agencies and several more set up an office nearby to work with the War Department in every way they could—before and after the dislocation."

What has happened in these states could also be told, with a substitution here and an alteration there, for many

other states. The examples are spread across the country from Canada to the Rio Grande; from the Atlantic to the Pacific.

In the case of the seventy-three families once living in an eastern area taken over as a proving-ground expansion project, each family was called upon directly, and asked the specific help it required. On the basis of these facts, each agency undertook responsibility for aiding those families which it was in a position to help most effectively. As a result, within two months all seventy-three families had left the area and nearly all had relocated on farms or found other jobs.

In one western county, the agricultural planning committee helped organize a farmers' cooperative to supply fresh, locally grown farm products to the nearby Army camp. The committee started work on this project in January, 1941, and by June a building had been erected and was being used for conducting the co-op's business.

A National Guard camp in a county in a northeastern state was to be enlarged considerably after being taken over by the Army. People feared that some good farmland might be included in the enlarged site. Accordingly, the local agricultural planning committee furnished data on types of land in the county to Army officials, and the Army acquired land less suited to agricultural production. There is little point in moralizing. The facts speak for themselves. Tens of thousands of farm men and women have answered the challenge raised by grass-roots planning. They have proved their ability to wrestle with complex social and economic problems. They have shown what the average man and woman can do when given the chance to plan for his own welfare, and that of his fellow

men. The thousands of examples of constructive action growing out of their suggestions—and there are thousands, although space forbids citing more than a few—are reason enough to see in grass-roots planning, as Vice-President Henry A. Wallace did, “a noble experiment in democracy.”

In reviewing the work of these farm men and women, freely given in the public interest, one thinks back again to Tom Paine, and the committees of correspondence in another troubled time which, “consistently with the American idea of Rights,” would “confer upon the matter, and put it into a train of operation.” It is such work as this that can afford the knowledge and power the nation needs in putting forth all its strength to win the war. Wartime is always an exigent time, and never before has war made such stringent demands upon every citizen. Inevitably, the opportunity of citizens to participate directly in the operations and policy-making of government, and for government to consult with the citizen, will be curtailed. But some day the war will be over, and the zeal and devotion and knowledge of farm people will be needed just as much then as now. The war has already wrought vast changes in our lives, and will wreak more. But no doubt changes just as profound as those of the last year will have to be made if our people, and farmers specifically, are to escape a much worse situation than that which engulfed so many individuals following the close of the last war.

## VI

### A War of *All* the People

*"Divide et impera* must be the motto of every nation that either hates or fears us."—ALEXANDER HAMILTON, *The Federalist*, No. VII.

The growth of governmental agencies to meet the needs of war has not been accidental. It is a very neat demonstration of supply and demand, of cause and result. So also, at a less rapid pace, the swelling of government in the decade before. These agencies for farmer and for non-farmer alike were the product of a clamor by people for action to deal with problems too big for individual control. The clamor ultimately expressed itself in legislation by the elected representatives of the people, the legislation required agencies to execute the policies it established, and finally the agencies themselves proliferated into shapes and procedures required by the problem they were created to attack.

This train of consequence has been more striking, of course, in relation to agriculture than to other economic groups. And the reason is simply that farm people were the group, of all others, least integrated into the technological, big-money, semi-cosmopolitan economy that had developed since the Civil War. Naturally, among farm people there was a greater proportion of people at a disadvantage in the struggle for a livelihood. This un-

favorable relationship extended from top to bottom of rural society. It meant not only that those on the bottom in agriculture were about as bad off as could be imagined, but it meant also that there were much larger numbers living in daily insecurity and grinding poverty than in any other group in the nation. This needs to be remembered by hasty urban critics of legislation designed specifically to help farm people.

For what we have done thus far to bring rural American families into a partnership in national prosperity needs to be regarded merely as a beginning. Many of the measures adopted during the last decade were hammered out in a time of urgency. They met the emergency, as almost all students of the issues will agree, and have thoroughly justified themselves up to this point. Yet some of these steps were distinctly emergency steps, and not measures that, unsupported, will serve as a permanent framework for American agriculture.

Now that we are at war it will be well to notice that the nation has not yet gone anywhere near far enough in giving the lower one-third or one-half, economically speaking, of the families in agriculture the equal chance that our democracy should give them. The matter becomes one of the utmost national concern when it is realized that the rural areas of the country are the source of most of the nation's men and women of the future. It is there that most American leaders are born. Thus, every section and every urban center has a very real stake in conditions anywhere in the United States under which future citizens are to be brought up.

But war means that this problem takes on even greater immediacy than that. The nation cannot easily afford the

paradoxical luxury of underprivilege. Equality of opportunity is just as basic to real freedom as any other of the great guaranties of our liberty. An equality of opportunity needs to begin in the cradle if it is to be fully realized. For great masses of farm people such equality even yet is largely nonexistent. There is no paradox in the fact that the rural areas are traditionally a major recruiting ground of our armies, that in every war farm boys rush to the colors. In the first place, they know perfectly well that, whatever their individual luck in American life, nowhere else on earth is there so large a measure of opportunity for them and for others like them. In the second place, Army or Navy pay and perquisites usually represent a genuine increase in their standard of living.

Behind them, they often leave families still living on the verge of want. This insecurity is dangerous to the war effort itself. To combat it, government needs to see to it that the burdens of war are spread so that such people are not home-front victims of the war. Moreover, the nation needs to move steadily ahead toward making into reality the promises of its great charters, the Declaration and the Bill of Rights. It is just here that the psychological maneuvers, the tricky perversions of human desires, practiced by the Goebbelses of totalitarianism, seek to find the Achilles heel of the enemy of dictatorship. There should be no swamp of human misery that can breed such vermin among us. There is little fear that strange neo-primitive doctrines of hate and division, fostered elsewhere, can make headway in this country so long as the great majority of even the poorest among us feel that their neighbors and themselves are moving toward the goal of ever

more fair and equal chances for all. Nor is there even much likelihood that there can arise among us the dictator who can use the legitimate grievances of the unfortunate to seize power for himself and his gang.

Moreover, we need the heart and brain and muscle of every man among us in order to win this war. The sharecropper is needed as much as the operator of the great wheat farm. To get that ready consent, the nation must look to the conditions under which sharecropper and tenant and hill-farmer and farm laborer are asked to produce for victory; and it must look to the extension of the democracy it is asking these underprivileged to defend.

Let us look in detail at the problem in peace and war, and the necessities it imposes upon those responsible for the conduct of the war.

### *The Plague of Underconsumption*

There are Mr. and Mrs. Brown, for instance, who "have been married 11 years and have moved eight times," according to a 1938-40 study by the Department of Agriculture of 500 low-income families. They gave up sharecropping after the first three years of married life and worked for wages on a farm. "Mr. Brown was paid \$8 a month for 8 months" and "had to pick up work where he could find it the rest of the year." This proved worse than sharecropping, and so he promised to pay \$40 for a mule and tried cash renting it. "This, too, was a failure. He was forced to give up the mule and go back to sharecropping. At the time the cash crop is sold, he always owes the landlord about the amount his crop brings. Then he must hunt day work to buy food for his undernourished family." Then there is the Jones family, ten of them,



none of whom has been further than the third grade in school. "The wife's health is very poor. Because there was not enough money for a doctor, a mid-wife was used at the birth of 7 of the 8 children." The Joneses have worked for wages and sharecropped, never ending a year with more than enough to pay the yearly bill assumed by the landlord during the making of crops. "Therefore, no money was available to buy clothes for the children to wear to school or to add to the home furnishings."

Or there are the Clarks and the Johnsons. "Mr. Clark never went to school a day in his life; but Mrs. Clark has a fifth-grade education. Although the 16-year-old girl has completed 3 grades, none of the other children, ranging in age from 6 to 14 years, have ever gone beyond the second grade. The children are not in school now as they do not have sufficient clothing." The 13 in the family live in a 4-room house with wooden shutters. After they made 3 crops with a "plug mule," the mule died and they had to start sharecropping. "About two weeks ago they killed 4 hogs and now have only 8 pounds of lard and about 100 pounds of meat left. With the exception of 20 gallons of syrup, that is all the food they have on hand. They have never grown a garden nor owned a milk cow." The Johnson family this year cultivated 50 acres of cotton and made seven bales. "Their entire time was devoted to the cotton—not even a garden was planted. Mr. Johnson lacked \$75 when the time came to pay his expenses." The Johnson family is nine in size and "lives in a two-room box type house." "The walls have not been ceiled and there are no window screens, doors, storage space, or toilet."

The names of these families, of course, are fictitious, but the cases are all too real. These are not poverty-

stricken city families who have just moved to the country. Most of the heads of these families have lived in the same county for 20 years or more. They have on an average 19 years of farming behind them. And they are young. The heads of most of these families are under 45, and their wives are about 6 years younger; yet they have 3 to 9 children. On an average, these farm men did not get beyond fifth grade; their wives did not get beyond sixth grade. Many cannot even write their names. Their children are often not getting any more book learning than they did.

"Why don't they go to town and get a good job?" That question is posed frequently by those without first-hand contact with such families. Particularly now is the question asked. The answer, of course, is that these people do not have the skills necessary to "get a good job in town." They do not have the physical stamina. They do not know how to prepare themselves to hold jobs in town. They do not even know how to apply for the jobs for which they are qualified. These things, and others that could be mentioned, add up.

That these families—and the unsung numbers like them—should exist as they do has been called "the black plague of the twentieth century." The nation has learned how to produce almost anything well. But it has not learned how to distribute the things we produce. During the years leading up to the war, people became accustomed to speaking in terms of surpluses. Yet millions of low-income people would eat more of these surplus foods if they had the chance.

A few simple facts tell the story. Back in 1935-36 three government agencies found that the average cash income

of two-thirds of our families—80 million people—was \$69 a month. Some 20 million people getting public assistance spent an average of 5 cents a meal for food. Compare this with the fact that our Army spends 53 cents a day for each man, and at wholesale, not retail, prices!

Now let us try to visualize the untapped market for goods among our low-income families. Families making \$500 a year or less, for example, buy only 28 per cent as much fluid milk as families making \$1200 a year; only 33 per cent as many tomatoes; only 46 per cent as much beef and 13 per cent as much lamb; only 44 per cent as much poultry, and 57 per cent as many eggs.

It has been estimated that if all the families making less than \$100 a month ate as much as those families which do make \$100 a month, nearly \$2,000,000,000 a year would be added to the national food bill. Farmers would probably have to grow more dairy products, more poultry products, more meats, and more of most of the fruits and vegetables than they are growing to meet the wartime production goals that were set up to feed not only our civilians and our armed forces, but also our allies. Over and above the land now in cultivation, an area about as big as the state of Iowa would be needed to produce the extra food for that potential \$2,000,000,000 market.

But if the picture of underconsumption is shocking in terms of the nation as a whole, it is even more eye-opening when limited to the farm front. Food comes from farms. But just about as many people do not have food of the proper sort on farms as in the cities. Most of the fibers in clothing come from farms and forests. But at least as many men, women, and children in the country do not have enough clothes as in the cities.

Wherever farmers and farm workers live in poverty, diseases like pellagra and rickets ride high. Pellagra and rickets are other names for slow starvation. They can be prevented without costly drugs or mysterious treatments. Enough good food will keep these diseases away. Tuberculosis hits most often and hardest among people who are badly fed. When you have not had enough of the right kinds of food, you are most likely to fall victim to a long list of diseases that, at first blush, seem to have no connection with the stomach. It goes without saying that underfed people cannot be expected to be good fighters or good workers.

It is an unfortunate fact that the average farm family in the United States does not grow more than 60 per cent of its own food in the course of a year. What they do not grow for their own tables, they buy in stores. And poorer families spend a much larger proportion of their income on store-bought food than farm families with greater resources. Those whose yearly income is below \$1000 a year spend about \$1 in each \$5 they get to buy food in stores. Around the \$2000-a-year level, families spend for food about \$1 in \$6. Over the \$5000 level, the figures are down to \$1 in \$7. Of all the things people buy with money, food is the last they cut down on when their levels of living fall. This is inevitable. People can get along wearing tattered clothes, and living in tumbledown houses, but they cannot keep going on the memories of last week's meals.

Farmers with low incomes spend a larger share of their cash on food than those who are better off. But that is not all. There is a big difference in the kinds of store food they buy, just as there is a big difference in the foods

bought by poorer people the country over. The low-income farm families stick to the cheapest foods such as fat-back, sowbelly, cornmeal, white flour, hominy, and grits. The medium-income families—and even more, the high-income farm families—can afford a larger share of vegetables, fruits, eggs, and milk.

How many farmers are there who can afford only fat-back, sowbelly, and cornmeal? The 1940 census shows that there are 6,096,000 farms in the United States. Of these, 3,460,000 had gross earned incomes from farm production of under \$800 in 1939. If allowance is made for improved conditions now as compared with 1939, and for retired farmers and farmers working off their farms, then there still must be well over 2,000,000 farm families in the country today which by almost any standard would have to be classed as ill-fed, ill-clothed, ill-housed. If the number were one-tenth as large, it would still be too high for national safety—too high for safety even in peace, and much too high for safety in war.

### *Underemployment on American Farms*

Underemployment is the No. 1 bogeyman of the low-income farmer.

It is likely that most of the nearly a million low-income farmers who have no other source of income—those employed on their farms at least 265 days a year—work only half as much as they could. Their farms are too small, their equipment is too scanty, and their skill undeveloped. The census shows that the total cash value of their present farm production averages only about \$500 a year, of which not more than \$400 is put on the market. A vast proportion of the nearly a quarter million part-time farm-

ers—those who work more than 100 but less than 200 days a year—have too few resources for full employment on the farm and only a limited chance to get steady jobs off the farm. And most of the more than a half-million sharecroppers, except in the planting and harvesting seasons, work less than half as much as they could, and can do nothing about it. As for the 435,000 low-income farmers who have received government rehabilitation loans, they are making better use of their powers than other low-income farmers, but there is still room for improvement in their soil, buildings, resources, and tenure arrangements.

Proof enough of the temper and breadth of underemployment in agriculture lies in the fact that the half of the nation's farmers receiving the lowest incomes produced only 12 per cent of the total value of farm production in 1939. The other 88 per cent was turned out by the half of the farmers who were better off. Moreover, in 1939 about 47.6 per cent of the nation's farmers earned less than \$600 each—and that includes products sold, traded, or used at home. And that is not all. For this huge group of almost half the farm families in this country, the average gross income from farm production was only \$350.

Let us suppose you are a farmer living in the great farm midland of America. You could grow enough food to bring you an income higher than that of nearly half the nation's farmers if you had a single cow, 12 pigs, and 50 hens. The cow would produce 170 pounds of butterfat at 37 cents a pound, which would bring you in \$63. The calf, vealed, would sell for \$20. The 12 pigs, averaging 200 pounds each, would sell for \$14 per hundredweight, which adds up to \$336. And the 50 hens, producing 7 dozen eggs at 25 cents a dozen, would account for \$87.

Add it all up, and you would have \$506, or well over the average gross income of nearly half our farmers.

It goes without saying that to care for these livestock and the small acreages of crops needed to feed them, would not mean full employment for the typical low-income midwest farm family.

Or suppose yourself to be one of the thousands of farmers in the South averaging \$350 worth of farm products sold, traded, or used at home. You could easily surpass this volume of production by growing less than 6 acres of cotton. If you got 370 pounds of lint per acre, and sold it at 19 cents a pound, you would make \$422. And if you sold 700 pounds of seed per acre for  $2\frac{1}{5}$  cents a pound, the additional \$92 would bring your total income up to \$514.

These are just estimates, but they are rooted in fact. The typical two-mule Delta cotton farm producing cotton, corn, and a small amount of livestock requires only about 2300 man-hours of labor per year, according to one research study. The amount of family labor actually available is 4090 man-hours. Result: Except during the two months of cotton picking, the family is less than half employed.

But how about all the cash flowing from wartime jobs in plants and factories? Surely some of it is jingling into the pockets of underprivileged farm families. Contrary to popular belief, wartime industrial and military activity is *not* laying extravagant new opportunities in the laps of the great masses of low-income farm families. These families have not been leaving their farms in any significant numbers to move into areas of war activity and take jobs in plants and factories.

According to a monthly survey of families who are receiving government help toward rehabilitation, an average of less than one family out of 25 moved to town or city during the last six months of 1940. During the same period in 1941, even fewer families moved to town or city. Of course, these families may have more stability than most typical low-income farmers. But only one in 23 of the farmers living on farms adjoining those of families receiving rehabilitation loans moved to towns or cities during the last six months of 1941.

Even more portentous are the findings of sample surveys on migration into 25 defense centers in the autumn of 1941. The surveys were concerned with civilians who moved into the area from outside the industrial county after October 1, 1940, and were still living in the area at the time of the survey. Although 23 per cent of the nation's people live on farms, the studies showed that less than 10 per cent of the migrant defense workers were employed full-time in agriculture before coming to the defense centers. The people coming into defense centers and getting jobs there were chiefly non-farmers.

There are several important reasons why farm people are not walking off with jobs in war industries. Reason number one is that job opportunities are opening up mostly to young people. There is little room for the older. The age of the average defense workers reported by the surveys quoted above was less than 30 years. Fewer than 15 per cent were 45 years and over. Yet the age of the typical farmer is 48 years, far beyond the age preferred for jobs in war plants.

Reason number two has to do with the distance traveled by war workers to get their jobs. Seldom did the



workers questioned in the surveys travel more than 100 or 200 miles. Moreover, they traveled least where farm underemployment is greatest—in the South, for example. Low-income farmers have not, to any large degree, migrated long distances to points where the wheels of industry are humming.

Reason number three is that low-income farm people are not trained for industrial jobs. Vocational training courses for war industries are not being made generally available to the low-income farmers. Thirty-one per cent of the people taking such courses between January and November, 1941, were located in California and New York. Yet those states in 1937 contained only three per cent of the total number of unemployed and underemployed farmers in the country. On the other hand, the nine southern states in which 43.1 per cent of the total unemployed and underemployed farmers lived—Kentucky, Alabama, Mississippi, Arkansas, Oklahoma, Georgia, North Carolina, South Carolina, and Louisiana—contained only 4.9 per cent of the individuals taking vocational courses. Vocational training courses tend to dot the map where the war industries are located, and not where the low-income farmers can take advantage of them.

Last but far from least, the attitude of low-income farmers themselves has been a stumblingblock of no mean proportions on their road to jobs off the farm. They are, for the most part, timid, conscious of their lack of skill, socially backward—in a word, they are afraid of moving to the city.

The truth about jobs for farmers, then, is that the middle-aged and older farmers who make up the lion's

share of our farm population, the unskilled, the socially backward, the people who live in agricultural areas far from industrial areas—in short, most of the low-income and underemployed farmers in the nation—are not in a position to get war jobs. Farm boys and girls do go to town, but the needy farmer with a family and single vocation is left behind, his unused manpower, land power, productive power ready to be marshalled for the difficult days ahead.

### *Some Causes and Some Remedies*

If these needy and handicapped farm families are to be helped to get back on their own feet under their own power, the deep-rooted causes that put them where they are must be taken into account.

Why is it that the people on top and those on the bottom are getting farther and farther apart?

Why is it that in many regions, the big farms are getting bigger and the small farms are getting smaller all the time?

And why is it that the traditional American farm, owned and operated by a single family—the yeoman ideal of Jefferson—has become more and more difficult to maintain?

Some of the fundamental forces pushing down upon agriculture are apparent in the perspective of the last century. For one thing, there is the dominance of the industrial business idea in the economic life of the country, involving, among other things, the loss of export markets for American agricultural products. Ever since the turn of the century, but particularly during the 1930's, one nation after another has been trying to sell all it could

abroad and buy as little from other nations as possible. This meant a scramble for what markets were left, a scramble in which those who could afford to harness the industrial revolution in agriculture to their own ends came out on top.

Associated with the growth of industry has been another force behind agriculture as it exists today: technology. Farm technology has been defined as "science, art, and invention. It is tractors, combines, corn pickers. It is the testing and breeding of animals and the conquest of diseases. It is hybrid corn, new kinds of wheat, soybeans, kudzu, and lespedeza. It is ways to feed cows, plants and men. It is road building and rural electrification. It is contour plowing, conservation of soil, management of forests, protection of wildlife. It is marketing and distribution. It is a race between insect pests and ways to kill them."

Mechanization has changed the face of American agriculture so much that between 1915 and 1940 the tractor, truck, and automobile made needless the labor of thousands of men and cut the number of horses and mules by 10 million. Technical progress has given us many new farm products, some of which we have been unable to put into the hands of those that need them.

Many small and middle-sized farmers got machinery. Many took advantage of new developments in soil practices and seed culture. But not enough did. The family-type farmer who tried to hold on often found that his land was wearing out under his intensive cropping practices. Foreclosure threatened the small owner, who had added to his expenses by buying machinery and then per-

haps hit a bad crop year. And people piled up on poor land too fast.

That brings us to still another force playing havoc with the security of farm people. Too many people are trying to make a living off American farmland. As large commercial farms have swallowed up family-type farms, the displaced people have been crowded into poor land areas. At the same time, the birth-rate in these poor areas has been much higher than in most other places. For example, the 400 counties with the nation's lowest living standards are predominantly rural, and in them the birth-rate is among the nation's highest.

These, then, are among the ponderous forces bogging down our millions of low-income farm families. Thousands of them in the years between wars were uprooted from the land, and wandered the nation's highways, eking out a miserable existence as seasonal workers in agriculture.

Many times the number of migrants then on the road, however, is the number of potential migrants. They are the people who have not yet been forced out of farming, but whose hold upon the land has become more and more precarious, and who, under "normal" peacetime conditions, must sooner or later find they can no longer stay where they are. They form a giant pool of underemployed from which the present migrant farm population came. It is from this pool that future flights toward security will take place, flights doomed to failure unless action is taken in their behalf.

To help the people in this great pool to get a decent livelihood and to add their full share to the nation's production, either on the land or elsewhere, to dry up at least

part of this great pool, many suggestions have been made. Some of these are as pertinent for waging total war as for progress in times of peace.

There is, for example, need for a broad national program of education. Such a program would mean better educational opportunities for rural children. It would include more vocational education for rural youth, so that they will be better equipped to live on farms or to work in cities during and after the war. It calls for an extension of present adult education work in rural areas to the end that more farm men and women will have a chance either to build better lives for themselves on the farm, or to train themselves for jobs off the farm. The war-training programs have made a start toward meeting some of these needs. They could well be expanded.

From the viewpoint of society as a whole, better education for rural people, young and old, is sheer necessity, whether for war or for peace. Uneducated or poorly educated adults are not properly equipped to produce either on farms or in cities, and are a drag on the more truly productive elements of the population. It is axiomatic that young persons seeking jobs of any type are vastly disadvantaged if they do not have at least a fair education. About 400,000 farm youths reach maturity each year. It is plain that the pressure they exert upon the living standards of both farm and city people is a problem not to be lightly pushed aside. True, this pressure has eased now, with full employment for nearly all who are qualified for employment, but it is sure to return with greater force than ever before when the war is over.

Somewhat similar to the problem of education is that of health. Poor health is an economic and social drain of

gargantuan proportions in rural areas, as well as in the cities—a very real impediment to victory in the war. The figures on pneumonia, tuberculosis, malaria, hookworm, pellagra, and venereal diseases in whole groups of rural counties open our eyes anew to the need for a rural public health program. It is not uncommon in some rural areas, for example, for the working time of the farmer and village worker to be cut as much as 25 per cent by malaria alone, although malaria could be virtually wiped out simply by screening farm homes and practicing reasonable mosquito control measures.

In health, as in education, the areas of the highest per-capita wealth are generally those with the highest public health standards, while those with the lowest per-capita wealth often have very low health standards. In some farming areas, there is only one doctor to serve as many as 2000 people. The status of public health work is often on par with that. In view of the facts, public health programs should be put on a national basis, where their benefits can be made available to all farm people, no matter where they live or how poor that area happens to be. Now, with more and more doctors being called to the armed services, the situation is even worse. And there is a question as to how many of these doctors will return to rural areas when they are mustered out.

It may be that, for successful conduct of the war, it will become necessary to have a rural counterpart of the wages and hours legislation and the unemployment insurance and old-age assistance now in effect for urban workers. Already, England has had to move in this direction as a result of war pressures, and as it becomes more and more necessary to maintain a supply of experienced farm labor

—to get the food needed to win the war—it will become more and more necessary to make such labor rewarding. The development of owner-operated family-sized farms has been, ideally, a guiding star of national agricultural policy for many years. Indeed, in some respects it is a policy as old as this nation. It is to be hoped that wartime pressures will not be so great as to fetter the efforts that have been and are being made toward this goal.

This general objective might be fostered, even in wartime, by a Federal policy of acquiring large agricultural land holdings placed on the market for various reasons, say, for the settlement of estates, and by providing for settlement of all reclamation or other new farmland, on a family-sized owner-operated basis. Equalizing of credit opportunities of small and large owners, and extension of cooperative loans to groups of operators of family-sized farms, both owners and tenants, for the purchase of needed equipment, also offer possibilities of increasing the intensity of the war efforts as well as affording avenues to improved living and greater production for peace.

### *This Is Their War, Too*

A first step and a basic step toward reality of democracy for our underprivileged is the provision for them of more food, more education, and better homes. Then they will feel that they have a real stake in democracy and in a war for democracy. They will know then that they belong, and learn perhaps for the first time how important they are. But more than that, if they are to be sure that they have these things, Americans in all walks of life will have to have more of a voice in determining the conditions under which they live and work. Now, in

time of war, we see more than ever that this is their country, too. More than that, this war is their war, too.

To the underprivileged in parts of the South, that means first of all a chance to vote. In 8 southern states today, the payment of a poll tax is made a requirement of voting. The toll upon the dignity of the individual citizen and upon our economy as a whole that this tax extracts is too well known to review at length. It is worth repeating, however, the percentage of adult citizens who voted in each of the poll-tax states in a recent year of a Presidential election: Alabama, 20.4 per cent; Arkansas, 18.5 per cent; Florida, 37.8 per cent; Georgia, 19.6 per cent; Mississippi, 16.2 per cent; South Carolina, 14.1 per cent; Tennessee, 33.5 per cent; Texas, 26.2 per cent; and Virginia, 25.7 per cent.

If these figures are all added up and worked out, the average turns out to be 24.1 per cent, the poorest voting record shown in any democratic country in the world. For the United States as a whole, the average that year was 56.2 per cent. The grip of the poll tax upon the people of the South needs to be broken once and for all if we are to save and strengthen our democracy.

The right to vote is just a means, however, and not an end in itself. There are other devices that can be used to help the people of this country manage the abundance that will be theirs. Now that there is enough to go around, people will not put up with anything less than abundance in the long run. What is more, they will insist upon taking a part in making the decisions about how to distribute it. The Department of Agriculture realized that when it undertook to sponsor the several devices to get the citizen



into the processes of government. It recognized from the start that the success or failure of these experiments hinged upon the degree to which the group members represented the farmers of their counties—not just some of the farmers, but all of the farmers.

Experience has confirmed the belief of the Department in the elective method as the means of assuring representative groups. The case of a particular western county will illustrate an undesirable situation resulting from the appointive method. In this instance, the example is that of an agricultural planning committee. The revealing question, of course, is "Who were the members of this committee?" Vital statistics show that the 15 committeemen were all native-born English-stock Americans of native parentage, except one. But in that county the English-stock Americans constitute only one-third of the population. All of the 14 committeemen were owners, in a county where tenants make up 26 per cent of the agricultural households and farm laborers 55 per cent of the people. Owners, who make up but 19 per cent of the agricultural households, were represented on the committee by around 100 per cent. Participation of different racial and economic groups is the lifeblood of citizen committees. In the Southwest, for example, the Spanish-American and the Anglo-American should both have a voice in the decisions affecting their welfare. Farm tenants as well as farm laborers should be represented.

Then there is the case of another county, this time in the Southeast. Two-thirds of the farm folk in that county are tenants, and most of them are sharecroppers. Here the point can best be made by looking at the instance of a particular family that lives just about the way half the

farmers in the county live. Let us say the name is Anderson.

The year before last Tom Anderson worked three acres of tobacco, and harvested about 2400 pounds from it, which he sold for 25 cents a pound. That was \$600, but half of that went to the land-owner. That left Anderson \$300. Fertilizer cost him \$60, but he got \$27 as half of his 3-acre share of an AAA tobacco payment. His cash income for a year's work, then, was \$267.

But not all that was his to keep. The year before, Mr. Anderson had not done too well, and when he sold his tobacco he did not have enough money to carry him through the year. His landlord guaranteed his grocery bill at the country store. When fall came around, Mr. Anderson owed \$92 at the store, and that came out of his \$267. For the year, that left Mr. Anderson exactly \$175 to live on.

If you should happen to visit Tom Anderson, as a staff member of the Department of Agriculture did, you could see for yourself how a man keeps his family alive on \$175 a year. The Andersons live in a cabin about five miles off the hard road. As you approached, you might see Mr. Anderson sitting on the step leading up to the porch, his right leg thrust stiff in front of him. He was going to the spring—there is no well or running water in the cabin—when he tripped and sprained a muscle. His two sons are sitting on the ground drawing pictures on the earth with their fingers. They are dressed in worn overalls, and are barefooted.

Not many visitors come by the Anderson cabin, so you are welcome, but Mr. Anderson does ask you to state your business. If you say you just want to talk, Mr. An-

derson is willing enough. The first thing he wants to know is what's in the news. He sees a paper for only a little while after his tobacco has been sold. There is no electricity for a radio.

Mr. Anderson is more than 50 years old, and he has been cropping for 30 of his 50 years. His father owned a farm, but Mr. Anderson's second oldest brother got it. Lately the Andersons have had a kitchen garden, as well as a winter garden. He expects to have meat from his pigs this year, and Mrs. Anderson has canned some tomatoes and peaches, and there will be snap beans to can later on.

In the summer, the Andersons eat what comes out of the garden, together with a chicken now and then, and of course "white meat." After the tobacco is sold, they splurge and buy beef. Because they did not can much last summer, they ran out of canned vegetables during the winter, but they managed on "white meat" and beans and gravy.

Mr. Anderson got a cow last fall, but she isn't much of a producer. In the summer she gives about a gallon of milk; part of the winter she gives a quart; and the rest of the winter she gives nothing. That is because there is no feed for her in the winter.

The children eat what the grown-ups do, except that when they go to school, they get free lunches. They used to eat little except biscuits for lunch, together with fat meat if there was fat meat.

Mr. Anderson may invite you inside his cabin. There you would see a bed against the walls in one corner; a straw pallet in another corner; a dresser, a few wooden chairs, and an old sewing machine. A ladder leads up to an opening in the attic. And a door leads into the kitchen

where there is an iron stove in which the Andersons burn wood for cooking. There are also pots and pans, some tin plates, and jars full of red tomatoes which Mrs. Anderson and her barefooted daughter have canned.

The reason for the visit of the interviewer from the Department was to determine whether the Andersons had heard of the agricultural planning work. They said they had not. Yet when the educational meetings sponsored by the local agricultural planning committee were described to them, they recalled that they had been invited but could not attend. In the first place, they had no car to get to town, and besides they did not have the right kind of clothes for meetings like that.

But when the Andersons heard about the things the planning committee had recommended in the county—things like school lunches, and soil conservation, and a traveling library, and road improvement—Mr. Anderson asked, "Well, what haven't they done?"

The answer is: they had not reached the Andersons. But Mr. Anderson had this to say for the planning committee in his county: "In a way they have. I see all these things happening, though I do say I didn't know what it was all about. The results are getting to me. But I'm not in on it. I guess that'll come. Takes time."

Grass-roots planning moved rapidly during the three years before the war toward wider participation by the Andersons of the country. As Mr. Anderson says, it takes time. But the interview with Mr. Anderson took place in the palmy era before the "date which will live in infamy." Today more than ever, the wholehearted cooperation of the low-income farmers is needed in the life of the nation.

The potential agricultural production that the country

needs can be realized only if the power of the Andersons is harnessed to produce war foods and fiber. If not harnessed, it is not likely that it will be possible in the United States to grow enough food and fiber to meet the demands of this country and other democracies throughout the world.

### *And This War Needs Them*

Some of the things needed to put to full war use the productive power of the army of underemployed low-income farmers have already been done, but yet more is needed. While such a program was under discussion in the Department of Agriculture, several specialists had estimated the war foods these underemployed, low-income farmers could produce if they followed improved methods of production, if they had access to operating capital such as feed, seed, fertilizer, and limestone, if they added some permanent capital such as sows, baby chicks, or heifer calves, if they improved their health, and if they worked out better arrangements with their landlords.

The estimates were that this year, then, this group of farmers could produce the following share of the food increases called for in 1942: at least 16 per cent of the milk, 35 per cent of the pork and lard, 40 per cent of the eggs, 12 per cent of the peanuts, 6.4 per cent of the soybeans, 17 per cent of the sugar beets, 46 per cent of the tomatoes for canning, and 97 per cent of the larger number of gardens. These proportions of the 1942 food increases were to be the output of farmers who otherwise stand idly by, unable to pitch in full strength to produce the foods we need so desperately. Assuming that the needed increases in food production will be at least as

great in 1943 as in 1942, then in 1943 these underemployed farmers could produce: 32 per cent of the needed milk, 39 per cent of the pork and lard, 79 per cent of the eggs, 12 per cent of the peanuts, 6.4 per cent of the soybeans, 17 per cent of the sugar beets, 46 per cent of the tomatoes for canning, and 97 per cent of the increased gardens.

Soon after Pearl Harbor, directors of the Department's low-income programs met to put down their war policy in black and white. In the days before the war, chief stress had been laid on rehabilitation; now it switched to production, with rehabilitation a secondary consideration in the case of regular low-income borrowers. It was felt that many other low-income farmers, whose land resources were inadequate for them to be eligible for regular loans, would be able to produce more food, feed, and other needed war crops, if a special credit arrangement could be made for them. It was also felt that many regular borrowers would need added loans for war crops. Accordingly, a special type of small loan not to exceed \$500 was launched for the benefit of any needy farmer who could produce food for victory.

In 1942 the Department is loaning money to 455,334 needy farm families to produce for the war. Most of these are regular borrowers who receive an average of \$800 a year in return for promising to follow a plan of operation that gears their farms directly into the war effort. Some 23,706 of these regular borrowers are receiving additional loans averaging \$299 for the sole purpose of growing war crops. Over and above these, 26,677 needy farm families not eligible for regular loans are getting special loans to grow war crops, an average of \$288 for each family.

When each of these families signed up for its loan, it also signed a pledge to grow more war crops, and specified how much more of each crop it planned to grow. Among the things needed most for the war, three are particularly well suited to the abilities of the small farmers: livestock, dairy, and poultry. As a result borrowers are being urged to increase livestock, dairy and poultry production in areas where these products are most needed.

In South Carolina, Georgia, Florida, and Alabama, for instance, each family revised its operating plan to include 50 more baby chicks, one more brood sow, two more milk cows. Supplemental loans for such purposes reached nearly every low-income family already receiving loans in the four states—some 54,000 families. By January, 1942, these southern farmers reported that they had raised some 5,000,000 chicks. They sold 2,250,000 cockerels to pay the original investment and feed bill. All pullets were kept for egg production; they are now producing more than 500,000 eggs a day. These farmers also bought 20,000 brood sows, which would normally produce litters of 120,000 pigs a year. And their additional 20,000 cows are expected to produce \$1,000,000 worth of milk this year, besides veal and young milk stock.

In order to insure that the credit it advances to the low-income farmer for vital war foods does not back-fire, the government rigidly directs the purposes to which this credit may be put. Otherwise, the way might be opened, albeit unintentionally, to inflation of farmland, livestock, and equipment prices.

Thus credit for war food production is being directed toward the following ends:

1. Increasing the acreage, and increasing the efficiency of the production, of needed crops.
2. Getting livestock on farms needing it, including gilts for breeding, baby chicks, cows headed for slaughter which are still fair producers, and heifer calves which would otherwise be vealed.
3. Buying feed and seed, fertilizer and limestone, implement and machinery repairs, and workstock.
4. Paying operating costs during the production season in order that the farmer can hold his crops and livestock until they are ready for sale.

Not only have loans to nearly a half-million needy farm families been geared to war production, but also the program behind the loans has been streamlined for war purposes. Simplified farm plans center upon essential foods. Farm supervision for war-essential crops is given priority. Service has been stepped up in order to reduce by several weeks the time it takes to get a loan. And borrowers who once had to fill out a half-dozen forms now fill out only three: next year they will fill out one.

Success of the loan program depends upon close cooperation of the borrowers and Department officials. There are more than 2000 supervisors engaged in this work. In order to promote understanding and cooperation and to cut down on house-to-house visits to some extent, 10,000 study groups have been formed, each consisting of six to twelve borrowers.

In addition to the FSA supervisors, many others have volunteered to help small farmers in their efforts to produce war crops. In the same 4 southern states mentioned earlier—South Carolina, Georgia, Florida, and Alabama—



1000 vocational agriculture teachers offered their services to conduct machinery repair courses for small farmers. Through an arrangement worked out with the government, classes are conducted twice each week in vocational agriculture shops in most of the counties of the four states. Farmers bring in their broken-down farm equipment to the shops, and learn how to repair by repairing their own. As soon as these first 1000 classes are completed, others will be started in different communities. But even after the courses are finished, the work shops are still open to farmers who want to use the equipment.

Migratory labor camps are another front at which low-income farm people are being helped to produce war crops. Established in 1935, at a time when people were talking about a labor surplus, these camps were designed to protect the migrant and the community through which he passed by providing improved housing, sanitary and recreational facilities for a portion of the hundreds of thousands of workers who follow the crops. But with the spotlight now focused on labor shortages, new uses have been developed for the camps.

One important use of the camps has been in the distribution of the farm labor supply. During 1939-41 the number of placements made by the Farm Placement Service in Washington, Oregon, and Idaho alone was nearly doubled. The number of placements increased by 110,000, of which about 100,000 were made by placement offices in Farm Security camps.

How the camps are being used as a base for routing workers to and from jobs was neatly demonstrated in the spring of 1942 on the west coast. Strawberry pickers were needed in Oregon, while pickers in California were unem-

ployed. Oregon growers turned to the State Employment Service for help. Arrangements were made with the California Employment Service for the transfer of idle strawberry pickers to Oregon. Pickers were recruited from the migrant camps; their transportation was paid by the growers and arranged by employment officials; and on their arrival in Oregon, the workers were housed in mobile camps.

With the camps as a base from which to shift workers rapidly to new jobs, the waiting period between jobs is lessened materially. Workers living in Farm Security camps in the Northwest average seven jobs per season. The camps also cut down periods of unemployability by safeguarding and improving the health of workers with adequate housing and sanitary facilities, and with a program for medical care. Day nurseries to care for babies and young children are also being used to free adult labor when needed.

By midyear of 1942 formal requests for the establishment of stationary camps have been received from 250 counties in 42 states. But not only are there stationary camps. With the shortage of automobile, rubber, and gas, mobile camps designed for use in areas where camps are needed for only a few weeks at a time, are being used to move workers from place to place.

Tents with tent platforms to house the families and community facilities moved by truck, and large trailers to house power plants, clinics, and sanitary units, make up the usual mobile camp equipment. Insofar as possible, the camps follow the migratory workers, as the workers in turn follow the crops.

In the spring of 1942 seventy-three mobile camps were

in operation on the west coast, in Arizona, California, Washington, Oregon, and Idaho. During the summer 19 new mobile units were opened along the Atlantic seaboard, serving Maryland, Virginia, North Carolina, Delaware, New Jersey, and New York.

Still another device being widely used to help needy farmers produce war crops is that of cooperatives. Cooperatives help to spread the loan money as far as possible, and enable borrowers to make the best use of their credit. They are multiplying with government assistance. For example, as of the close of 1940, there were 6400 farm machinery services organized with government help. They owned about 9500 pieces of machinery, and about 75,000 farmers took part in using that machinery. One year later, there were more than 11,000 equipment cooperatives, they owned 16,500 different machines, and more than 100,000 farmers shared in their use. Those who know say that since the start of this year, an even bigger increase has taken place. As machinery grows scarcer and scarcer, more and more farmers are getting group loans from the government so that they may make their purchases together.

Less direct, perhaps, but certainly as basic as any other way in which the government is enabling low-income farmers to produce more, is through helping them to get medical care. Disabilities such as hernia, bad teeth and tonsils, infected adenoids, and other physical handicaps are being taken care of so that small farmers will be strong enough to do their wartime production job. As of the spring of 1942, well over 100,000 families held membership in medical care programs which the Department of Agriculture helped finance, which meant that more than

500,000 poor farm people were being helped to new war-time strength.

### *Making the Four Freedoms Come True*

In order to achieve the greatest possible output from this group of farmers, many of the measures that have been suggested above would be helpful, as would the extension of general rehabilitation programs. But more than that is needed. "There must be opened up to low-income farm people the opportunity to become an important part of the community, to close the gap that seems to stand between the disadvantaged and the more fortunate in agriculture," in the recent words of two government officials engaged in program planning. "There must be the opportunity for neighborhood activities, for discussion groups, for community recreation, for free expression of religious convictions."

To that it might be added that people in all walks of life and all economic groups need to have the opportunity to share as equal citizens in the making of policies. As has been pointed out before, the democratic process does not end with elections. Democracy in the conduct of the Executive, the administering branch of government, also requires the active participation of the people. That does not mean just some of the people. It contributes just as much to the dignity of a low-income farmer to give him a chance to share in the making of policies and programs, as it does to give him a chance at making a better living. He needs as much as any other farmer to feel that he is a free and responsible actor. And the nation will prosper, too, in such measure as it approaches the goal of giving economic opportunity and, in the widest sense, political

opportunity alike to those of its people who have been less fortunate than others.

Again and again the President has emphasized that "freedom from want" is one of the great objectives in this war, both of the United States individually and of the United Nations collectively. The ringing declaration of the Atlantic Charter has been reiterated in speeches since, until the "Four Freedoms" is a household term. Let us remember that they are four parts of an indivisible whole. Freedom from fear, from want, to speak our minds, to worship as we please, all are part of the kind of democracy we want to insure in this country and to see spread all around the world.

That kind of democracy needs all of us.

## VII

### Non-Farmer Citizens and the War

"Willing acceptance of restrictions can be expected only if the Government takes the trouble to make it clear how and why the restrictions are necessary."—RAYMOND CLAPPER in his daily column of June 15, 1942.

Up to this point, this book has been concerned with ways in which farmers have participated, or can participate fully, in winning the war. But farmers do not live in a vacuum, any more than agriculture exists in an economic vacuum. Urbanites and farmers are in a sense neighbors, just as agriculture and industry have little meaning apart from each other. It is of importance that the participation of farmers in governmental undertakings in war and peace be considered in relation to similar participation by non-farmers.

To round out the discussion of these problems from a national standpoint, therefore, it has seemed desirable here to look briefly at the magnitude of the governmental jobs undertaken by some of the major war agencies, and to see to what extent they too have been able to obtain participation by and support from the average citizen.

We are now in our third year of strenuous exertion, making the conversion from a nation at peace to a nation at war. Out of the confusion and hurry and strain of those brief years, it is possible now to see a pattern emerging, a

purpose and an order that will make our expenditures of energy produce the greatest possible results. This book is not concerned with military matters as such. It may be taken for granted that the winning of battles is the ultimate aim of everything done now. It is with the non-military actions that are the prerequisite for military success that this work is concerned. In a sense, there is only one civilian phase to this war, that is, the production phase. Yet in order to achieve full production, it is necessary to do a good many things that are not strictly part of the productive process. Runaway prices, for instance, could have a very adverse effect on production. They could throw the whole economy out of gear, and valuable production time could be lost as a result of the dislocations that would follow. Thus while the War Production Board has supreme authority and responsibility, under the President, for getting factories and farms to produce to the utmost, the Office of Price Administration has similar responsibility for keeping down living costs and seeing to it that what is available for civilian use is fairly distributed.

### *Men, Machines, and Prices*

In taking a look at what the country now has, however, on the purely production side of this picture, it is advisable to deal with the War Production Board as the agency primarily charged with getting full industrial production for victory. His job, Donald M. Nelson told a Congressional committee in June, 1942, "is to win this war as quickly as possible and to win it without giving in to the forces which have contributed to the moral, social, and political system which our enemies have embraced." The job will call for "every available resource of material, men,

machines, and management to produce finished weapons, tanks, guns, planes, ships or component parts or services—or goods necessary to maintain civilians at a productive level of health and efficiency.” After emphasizing the size of this task, Mr. Nelson said, its first phase is “planning the requirements for material, for men, for machines, for management, for each segment of the war economy.” He added, “We need finished weapons for ourselves and our allies—we must know what kind and how many. We need machines to make those weapons and their parts, railroad equipment and ships to move them, power plants to drive the machines, and so on, and we must know what kind and how many. We need food, clothing, housing, medical supplies and the like to keep our civilian population at a productive level of health and efficiency and we must know what kind and how much. These are questions of civilian determination; that is our job, as we see it, to develop a sufficient supply and the use and distribution of that supply.”

The next phase of the job is to know what the country has “in materials, in machines, in men, in management.” “We must know how much we have, where it is, what condition it is in, how it can be changed to do different jobs.”

But the third and crucial part of the job is “balancing what we need and what we have.” This “means planning and it means directing,” said Mr. Nelson, and concluded: “We must see what needs to be done and what can be done over a period of time, and then do it. The plans may call for getting more—increasing what we have—by searching for new mines, by building new plants and machines, by converting old plants and machines, by finding



new workers, notably women, by retraining workers to new tasks and by discovering and fostering new managerial skills. Or the plans may call for cutting down our needs—for deciding that in view of all the circumstances certain of our requirements cannot or need not be as great as we had thought. Most often these days, the plans call for both—for increasing what we have and for cutting down on estimates of what we need. Now, I would like to emphasize that these plans for requirements and resources are not static. There is a constant flow of requirements and a constant series of changes in requirements and a constant flow of resources and a constant change in the availability of resources, and the balancing of these is a continuing task.”

The production record of the country since we entered the war is a matter of knowledge. It is a tribute indeed to industry and to government alike. But even more is it a tribute that it has been and is being achieved without excessive regimentation or control. In Mr. Nelson’s words, the aim has been not merely to get production but to get it “without giving in to the forces which have contributed to the . . . system our enemies have embraced.” The fact that it has been possible to do this for war is encouraging assurance that it can be done for peace. In both instances, the size of the job makes it imperative that individual abilities be drawn fully into service, and that this be done through truly democratic, voluntary methods.

So much for the attack on the purely production aspects of the war effort. Earlier, the significant relationship between a stable economy and full production has been emphasized. In order to see just what this machinery for

keeping our economy in balance means, however, let us take a closer look. Since we have heard from Mr. Nelson concerning the job he is doing on production, perhaps it would be just as well to let Leon Henderson, the Price Administrator, tell about his equally vast and complex assignment.

"Under the Price Control Act we now have statutory responsibility for all commodity prices, for some service charges, and for rents . . ." Mr. Henderson told the same committee a month earlier, and he added that "because of the gravity of the inflation threat, we took action, at the President's suggestion, to put ceilings on all prices that could be administratively reached under the Price Control Act." On controlling rents, he said that "there are now 323 defense rental areas, containing about 80,000,000 population, which gives you an idea of the importance of the action taken under our rent authority." Of the rationing programs, Mr. Henderson said, that "we are what we call kitchen mechanics" on "the following rationing programs now under order and about to be put into effect: First, for tires, which has been supplemented with the control of the retreading and recapping business; also, the rationing of automobiles, the rationing of sugar, the rationing of typewriters, and the rationing of gasoline on the eastern seaboard." Since then other areas have been put under rent control and other communities have been rationed.

A third significant step toward total mobilization of the nation for war has been the establishment of the Federal Manpower Commission. The exertion by the country of full national strength and energy made this measure inevitable. Let us add, then, for purposes of this discussion, to the problems of production (War Production Board)

and the problems of keeping the economy in balance (the Office of Price Administration and later the Office of Economic Stabilization), a third problem: That of putting the right man in the right spot to lend his full power to the winning of the war. Chairman Paul V. McNutt, explaining his agency's work to the same committee, had this to say:

"The function of the Commission in a word is to assure the most effective mobilization and utilization of the Nation's manpower. . . . What we drain off for civilian use of manpower simply removes a certain number from the pool which might otherwise be available for military manpower. There is a direct connection, realized by all the people, that in the conduct of any war you must have manpower for the armed forces, manpower to produce the materials necessary in the conduct of the war, and manpower to produce the necessary food. Those are the three essentials."

Then Mr. McNutt proceeded to name to the committee a few of the multifarious separate agencies that he uses to accomplish this task. The list itself emphasizes the tremendous extensions of governmental responsibility and authority required by the war effort, for it ran to many lines of type and included all or parts of the Selective Service System, Federal Security Agency, the Department of Labor, and many others.

These three are simply three illustrations, in terms of agencies, of the tremendous difficulties of conversion from peace to war. They are difficulties that could not be overcome without vast extensions of governmental authority and personnel. Every reader knows that there are countless other interwoven problems, and that a long list of gov-

ernmental agencies had to be set up to deal with them. In addition, many of the so-called old-line departments of the Federal establishment have been forced to expand greatly the areas of their responsibility.

Thus, a vast governmental machinery has had to be created to meet home-front responsibilities, and additional machinery may yet have to be set up. From bottom to top, our entire national economy is closely coordinated under governmental direction. Consumer purchases, retailers' sales, civilian activities, civilian morale, raw materials, tools and supplies, production, labor, transportation, construction, our relations with foreign countries all are controlled now by one or more governmental devices.

These great war measures represent major changes in our way of life, at any rate for the duration of the war. Because controls are necessary to help us win the war, our people are willing to accept them. Restrictions we can bear now in good heart, in exchange for assurance of a finer liberty when the peace comes. Restrictions and controls now are but a part of the price we are paying for the future. The above swift glance at some of them emphasizes their impact on the individual's daily life. The character of these wartime instruments, therefore, needs to be analyzed carefully, and then shaped toward maximum usefulness for the post-war period, for we cannot suddenly abandon them when the war is over. To judge from the past and the present, the future will be one in which governmental controls will be just as important as ever and the problem of using them democratically will be even more acute.

At first glance, the summary above would appear to be terrifying to a people whose forefathers feared too much

government as a plague. Yet a strong democracy has nothing necessarily to fear from these invasions of individual privilege. We have seen that it was inevitable that government reach out its hand to deal with the problems of depression. How much more necessary is it that government take whatever steps are needed to win the war! The extension of governmental influence is one of two things necessary if a democracy is to fight a major war successfully. The other thing necessary is that it remain democratic. And the two are not inherently incompatible. It is perfectly possible to exercise wide powers, to act swiftly and decisively, yet to avoid the pap-feeding, the paternalism, the despotism, that result from the gargantuan state. The key to reconciling whatever appears irreconcilable in the two necessities lies in making the war programs genuine reflections of the will of the people. And equally, in the peace to come, this reconciliation is not only possible but necessary.

### *Offices of Civilian Defense and Offense*

There is good reason to believe, as has been said elsewhere in this book, that the United States up to this point has waged the most democratically conducted war ever fought by a great power. The degree to which undemocratic or anti-democratic actions have been avoided is apparent only upon closer inspection of ways taken to obtain democratic participation in the work of winning the war than is ordinarily accorded the governmental war programs. Perhaps it is significant that among the first of the agencies set up in this war was the Office of Civilian Defense. In the World War there was no such agency. Yet it seemed obvious from the start this time that the duties

it was to perform were among the most important of all wartime tasks. Its establishment marks the American people's waging of its first total war. Never before have civilians been on the front lines. Never before has the stamina and courage of the dwellers in a city like London, far beyond the lines, become as important as the stamina and courage of soldiers in the front lines. This means more than simply the threat of bombers in the sky. It means, too, that only full effort of all the people in a nation will suffice for victory in this new kind of war. "We are now in the war," President Roosevelt said when the time came. "We are in it all the way. Every single man, woman, and child is a partner in the most tremendous undertaking of our American history."

Accordingly, the OCD has begun to tap the well-spring of democratic power through development of individual and community participation in work of local civilian defense councils. Thousands upon thousands of citizens, urban and rural, are working in this program, serving as air-raid wardens, nurses' aides, auxiliary policemen and firemen, airplane watchers, teachers and students in first aid, or in recruiting volunteer personnel for other war activities. Through their efforts, volunteer workers are found for Federal and state programs in the fields of health, family security, child welfare, social problems, recreation, and education; welfare programs of private and community agencies; information services to men in uniform and for defense industry workers and their families; USO programs, consumer information, salvage work, promotion of War Bond sales; national unity programs fostering inter-group goodwill, protection of civil liberties, adult education, patriotic rallies, exhibits, as well as war relief work.

Local defense councils have a task far broader than that of air-raid protection. Safety is but one of their responsibilities. The total job embraces many forms of action and many types of interests. These councils are a significant effort to enable civilians to take their place in the fight for democracy. As a warden, an ambulance driver, a rescue worker, or in some other capacity, each man and woman can see and feel that all have a common responsibility for winning the war, and that each must do his part.

But individual participation by the rank and file of the people, plus a high degree of local responsibility for decision-making, are important in other aspects of the war program not specifically dedicated to enlisting participation.

The major instances where government has turned directly to great numbers of lay citizens for making a war program work, of course, are in the Selective Service Boards and in rationing and control of prices. In some ways, these are more significant instances than that of the Office of Civilian Defense itself. Thousands of citizens have worked long and hard to make a success of the Selective Service Boards, and Mr. Henderson, for OPA, has estimated that his organization has been forced to "tap" no fewer than 2,000,000 volunteers in its first two years of operation. Every one of these was a volunteer who received no pay for his service. In the summer of 1942 there were thousands of local price boards composed of these citizens serving without compensation. Success in such a complicated, tremendous program as this obviously will require a considerable staff of technicians—lawyers, economists, and others. Yet success is even more dependent

upon the devotion, integrity, and intelligence of great numbers of laymen.

"The number of adjustments that have to be made and the number of individual requests that have to be considered by these local boards in order that life may go on, is simply tremendous in a country as large as this," Mr. Henderson has said, and it should be recorded here that the citizens who have embarked upon these very difficult jobs have earned the thanks of their countrymen for their performance. The remarkable work of the public school teachers of the country in this and other service merits special recognition.

### *The Management-Labor Committees*

An outstanding example of wartime democracy is provided in the War Production Drive of the War Production Board. Mainstays of this drive are the joint management-labor committees established in most of the factories and plants engaged in heavy war production. Need for all-out industrial production brought these committees into being. Industry had the job of producing 45,000 tanks in 1942, 60,000 planes, 20,000 anti-aircraft guns, 8,000,000 ship tons. That called for the best brains and efforts of management and labor, used jointly upon the common task. In other words, extension of the democratic principle in industrial processes was necessary.

"Through these reports," said a recent publication of the War Production Board, "shine two facts that should give pride to management and labor, and heart to the country at large. The first of these is: That in a majority of cases production *can* be increased, and the President's



quotas can be met. The second of these is: That management and labor are eager to cooperate, to work together, to put the common good above the individual advantage."

In more than 1000 large industries, management-labor committees are helping to boost production. The general pattern is that of joint management-employee representation. The plant committees appoint subcommittees as necessary, and then begin concerted work to make everyone do his share in the job, and feel a part of the enterprise. Production scoreboards are erected. In frequent conferences ways to get efficiency and to reduce wastes are considered. Suggestion boxes are installed in the plants, so that employees can make suggestions about better operation. Bulletin boards and posters are set up to emphasize the importance of each plant's production. News on production goes to employees. Letters are sent to wives of workers, mass meetings and parties are held for workers' families, and everything possible is done to enlist worker-interest. These are a few of the devices used in bringing worker and manager together for joint participation in production. These committees are eye-opening examples of wartime democracy in action.

Effects of this management-labor cooperation have appeared in terms of higher production in hundreds of industries. In the plant of the Symington-Gould Corporation in upper New York State, for example, it has caused a sharp increase in production of tank parts. The management-labor committee, as one of its first acts, arranged for a completed tank to be driven through the plant, so the workers could see what it looked like and appreciate the importance of their tasks. From then on, posters, suggestion boxes, production charts had a deeper meaning to

everyone. Competition between departments became keener, and production swung upward.

At Colt's Patent Firearms Manufacturing Company in Connecticut, similar results followed establishment of the committees. Three vice-presidents of the company and three prominent union officials were among the 16 members chosen to head up the plant-wide committee. Some 30 subordinate committees have now been established in the plant, and numerous advances in production have been made through their work. Some 75 suggestion boxes have been installed within the plant. Like progress has resulted in plants of the Westinghouse corporations, the Northern Pump Company of Minneapolis, and the Continental Roll and Steel Foundry Company of East Chicago, Illinois, among many others.

There is another side to insuring that government and the people, on whose behalf it acts, see eye to eye. The most effective way of achieving that result is, of course, participation in the war effort itself. But it is also necessary, as we have seen earlier, that government make every effort to explain its courses and motives if that sympathy between people and government that is so desirable is to be maintained. Indeed, it is not possible for government to shift part of its load to individual citizens without giving them the greatest possible information on why they should carry that load. Getting full, truthful information to the greatest possible number of citizens may be regarded, therefore, as a principal war task.

Here, too, government has in the main realized this fact. The aim was succinctly set forth by Elmer Davis in one of the first statements he made upon assuming its directorship: "This is a people's war, and to win it the people

should know as much about it as they can. This Office will do its best to tell the truth and nothing but the truth, both at home and abroad. Military information that would aid the enemy must be withheld; but within that limitation we shall try to give the people a clear, complete and accurate picture.

"The Office of War Information will not, and does not want to, curtail the open-door policy that has always prevailed in the dealings of the government with press and radio and other news media. It is our hope, however, that we can put an end to conflicting statements which confuse the public mind. This can be done, I believe, by giving the complete truth to the public as rapidly as possible, and by endeavoring to establish procedures which may enable different agencies to reach agreement before a given issue comes to the state of publication."

That may be submitted as the ideal platform upon which government may stand in its relationship to the people, and for that matter the positive actions taken thus far during the war to draw people into its conduct can be justifiably subject only to minor adverse criticisms. What may be said is that what has been done thus far needs to be added to, not subtracted from, and that it will be harder and harder to do that as we are drawn deeper into a fight for existence. To this point, the government has signally succeeded in *refraining* from actions that would stifle citizen participation. There has been none of the suppression of speech or assembly, almost none of the violent hostility toward even innocent dissidence, that has marked other wars. This is a real achievement. Yet it is a somewhat passive achievement, and there remains a need for continuing, aggressive effort to keep this war a people's war in

the sense that they understand it and play their full roles in winning it.

The gravity of the problem implicit in these statements cannot be too heavily underscored. For as we win the war, so we will embark upon the tasks of peace. The dangers of inflated bureaucracy, whether of official or of private groups, the danger of too expert competence that ignores the desires and needs of ordinary citizens—all of the multifarious perils that the complexities of modern living have forced upon us, will be a thousand times greater when this war ends than at the end of any previous war. A moment's reflection upon the size of the jobs outlined in the words of Messrs. Nelson, Henderson, and McNutt will emphasize this point.

It would be hard, to exaggerate, then, the importance of keeping this huge machinery flexible and responsive to popular will, of making it really and truly the people's instrument in winning a people's war.

## VIII

### The Managerial *vs.* The People's Revolution

"War . . . is the classic prod."—PENDLETON HERRING, *The Impact of War*.

A new witchcraft is abroad in the world, and under the pressures that war always generates it may have strange growths. This witchcraft, as was the old, is the product of the search for certainty. Weighed down often by private burdens and public woe, the average citizen is a strong one indeed who does not sigh, at least occasionally, for some strong compelling voice to give him direction. If this be true in our own relatively blessed land, how much more true is it among the other, less fortunate peoples of the earth! We know only too well what this desire has led to in other lands. Yet we have seen its growth in the United States, too. Even here, there has been what at times appeared widespread flight to the refuges of cynicism, of action for action's sake, of ivory-towerism, of the idealized eccentric and esoteric. Symbolic of this flight was Joseph Wood Krutch's book of more than a decade ago, *The Modern Temper*, wherein Mr. Krutch described the modern intellectual's lamentable plight, cut off from the soil, from faith, from even the belief in the power of reason to compensate for the mere fact of birth, life, and death.

Renewal of faith, of self-confidence, of relish in life sim-

ply because living is a good thing, is the other side of war. It is one of the few compensations for the ugliness, the dirt, the brutality, the waste, that war always means. Men do not fight unless for something they believe, however mistakenly, worth fighting for. In a series of ringing speeches and articles, Archibald MacLeish has defined the new spirit brought alive in America when those things we hold dear were challenged. We found that, after all, the attributes of American life we had taken for granted were valuable. Most of us discovered, indeed, that when put to the touch we were ready to lay down our lives, if that were necessary, to defend this heritage. Mr. MacLeish has assailed that generation of artists, and he readily includes himself among them, who doubted, who found no savor in the common lot, who found no virtues in American democracy to counterbalance the flaws of that democracy. Perhaps Mr. MacLeish, just because he has been a part of that generation, has chosen the wrong horse to belabor. After all, artists are pretty much at the mercy of the society in which they live. What these writers wrote about was not only what they looked for, but also what was here to see. Every American shares in some degree the responsibility for the condition that Mr. MacLeish has described.

At all events, our people were saved, partly by the innate good sense of the American character, partly by the good luck which attended our birth as a nation and has followed us through our national life. We have had no genuine Hitlers even if here and there we have had some minor and unwelcome approaches to Hitler. But the United States shared with other countries in the disillusion that was epidemic in the world after the other World

War. And that disillusionment itself was not accidental. Just as surely as international debt settlement was a product of war, so was disillusionment. It grew from a century or more of emphasis upon reason at the expense of emotion, upon the machine at the expense of the worker, upon material rights at the expense of human rights. The war of 1914-18 was simply the evil flower of that evil growth.

Many have said that this war is only the second phase of a war in which the years between 1918 and 1939 were years of an armed truce. It may be true, for certainly the peace of 1918 settled nothing of importance, and in the years between the battles the conviction spread, like a disease over the world, that the devastated towns, the mangled bodies living and dead, the blasted lives of the innocent had all been in vain. Yet, so far as Americans were concerned, that *was* a war to save democracy, and so is this war. There must be a different ending, if there is to be a different sequel to the story this time.

The country has made a good start toward doing just that. This war, so far as the United States is concerned, has been the most democratically conducted war ever fought by any great nation. Yet all of us need to keep before our eyes the simple, fundamental fact that liberty is worth fighting for, that victory alone is not our goal but the triumph of freedom itself. Mostly it is the intellectuals, the people at the top in government, the leaders in business and other fields, who become disillusioned. The great mass of common people do not become cynical until a long time after the few. Farmers and country folk, in particular, rarely are cynics. They may be hardheaded skeptics, yes. But they just do not lose faith in themselves or in people in the large. There is little danger of new years of

sterility if those who are in positions of power and trust remember that the war is being fought for a reason, that peace will be only another truce unless they do remember that.

### *The Fallacy of Managerial Expertness*

In the perspective of a century, it is possible to see that the failure of the peace after 1918 was part of the general pattern of failure of decades to make good the promises of rationalism. The great victories of freedom in the French and American Revolutions were perhaps the high point in the contributions of the Age of Reason to human progress, just as the triumph of freedom in the American Civil War may be taken as the most embracing contribution to human welfare of the machine age itself. Those great victories for the single human being, however, were never fully realized. Perhaps it is necessary to place the failure of the peace of 1918 in such a perspective if another fruitless success is to be avoided.

For the cynical years in which America is said to have come of age were the years in which the specialist had triumphed. It was in that time that the vice of expertism attained a growth which had not lived before in the world. The world had become a world of gadgets. They were gadgets that had overwhelming significance for the race, but they remained gadgets, the benefits of which were more potential than real for 90 per cent of the population of the globe. Electric washing machines, refrigerators, and sewing machines, air conditioning, cheap motor cars, and radios, vacuum cleaners, oil-burning furnaces, even telephones—how many of the billion human beings in the world could even imagine, much less own any of



these? The triumphs of science, the ingenious triumphs of the spectacularly clever deviser, so dazzled this generation with their wonders that it forgot that to people who did not have them, they existed now no more than they did in the Ice Age.

These were the triumphs of the specialists, and this was their failure.

This failure in peace has bred war. Now that war is upon us again, let the people be wary of entrusting too much to the expert in the waging of that war. The precedent of peace gives us no reason to expect that a people can turn over to a few leaders the conduct of its fight for national existence. Nor can the nation afford to accept the judgment on general matters of men whose whole lives have been devoted to a single narrow subject. Humanity and its problems are too broad for that. Within their own fields we will do well to use the special knowledge of the scientist, the administrator, the particularists of all kinds. Indeed, it would be just as fatal to turn our backs wholly upon the expert as it would be to deliver our fate wholly into his hands. Yet in a world as complex as today's, the danger is rather that complexity itself will give the average men, laymen, a mass inferiority complex.

In the last two decades strange politico-economic beliefs have bred from this source. In this country there was "technocracy," the proponents of which thought that the engineers would relieve everyone else of the responsibility for worrying about difficult decisions. The idea was that engineers know so much more than the ordinary mortal that it would be safest to let them arrive at coolly objective decisions that would be best for the most people. The trouble with that is, of course, that the knowledge of

engineers equips them more meagerly than does that of the average citizen for making the important decisions. Intimate acquaintance with physics is of no help whatever in deciding whether a given price for milk is fair to housewives and dairymen alike.

In other countries we have seen the related doctrines of totalitarianism, of "national socialism," and other varieties of this same belief, seize hold upon whole nations. And now that we are at war, our country has in it as many people who hold such views as it had before we went to war. Just as it intensifies everything else, war is sure to intensify this belief among those who hold it. The country cannot afford to forget about such beliefs, simply because the cruder expressions of it in the German-American Bund, the Crusaders, and the other fascist organizations have been outlawed. For that matter, the danger to democracy always has been greater from men and organizations that seemed wholly American than from those which bore recognizably foreign labels.

The most recent and in many ways most insidious of these notions of expertism is that put forward last year by James M. Burnham in his book, *The Managerial Revolution*. Here Mr. Burnham goes the technocrats one better by including just about all of the experts in his "exploiting group." The managers that Mr. Burnham expects to be running our society are the specialists who run industry and government. Moreover, they are not at all the elected persons who, under the Constitution, are responsible for government. They are the men who know so much about this, that, or the other aspect of science and society that they can manipulate affairs in their own interests, and the great majority will be none the wiser. Or, if the others do

know what is going on, they will be either helpless to stop it or not interested.

Now, one of the managers that Mr. Burnham singles out for particular mention has, it so happens, replied to him. As examples of enterprises with executives who are to be the managers of the future, Mr. Burnham picks out the General Motors Corporation and the Tennessee Valley Authority. His choice was fortunate in one respect, anyway, for there are few more ardent disciples of democracy in this country than the men responsible for conduct of the great Tennessee Valley experiment. One of them, David E. Lilienthal, has answered Mr. Burnham in words that deserve notice.

Characterizing Mr. Burnham's book as "superficial, pontifical, and as full of unsupported assumptions as a country dog is full of burrs," Mr. Lilienthal nevertheless urges all of the experts—administrators and scientists alike—to read it. "For here is a preview of the kind of package in which the confused and discredited notions of an American social revolution are to be sold to the American middle class, and particularly the administrators, managers, and executive technicians." Mr. Burnham is in the ancient line of the practitioners of witchcraft. He panders, too, to the desire of many people for certainty, for a strong hand that will leave no room for worrying about what to do in hard situations. "It is a 'wave of the future' book," says Mr. Lilienthal, "by which I mean that you are *told* what is happening to the world and to America, and what is going to happen, with a sureness of prediction that reminds me (I blush for my irreverence) of a Dodger fan just before the opening of the season. We are told that certain events are 'inevitable,' that we have no choice;

the only thing for us to do is to relax and try to enjoy it." And then Mr. Lilienthal gives his own position, one with which men who believe in our system and way of life can find no quarrel:

"Every sophisticated manager knows that tyranny and exploitation feed upon excessive centralization of administration. He knows that overcentralized administration dries up the wellsprings of initiative, of energy, and of independence in any organization, and most of all in governmental institutions. It is overcentralization that gives a 'clique of headquarters couriers' an opportunity to maneuver and flatter their way to power which they are not qualified by their abilities to exercise. Absentee government is the quickest way to raise up the exploiting managerial class that Mr. Burnham's book predicts with such confidence. But these prophecies need not be fulfilled; we do have a choice, for the hazards of managerial exploitation can be diminished by skillful efforts in the direction of centralized administration of centralized authority."

To which it should be added that the trouble goes deeper than administration. It goes to the spirit of the times itself, that spirit which by enthronement of special competence tended to deny the capacity of the common man. This is the real anti-democratic spirit, and it is this we have to fear more than the forms of government or the economic institutions in which it is embodied.

### *Who Will Guide the Experts?*

Men are today living in a new and strange world. It is as different from that of, say, 1900 as daylight is from dark. Sweeping changes of nation-wide and world-wide scope have come. It is a world filled with complex, new relation-

ships and problems. Physical civilization has been moving too fast for men and institutions to keep up with it. This advance has opened the gates upon hitherto unknown economic and social possibilities. It is a new world. Man is able to produce plentiful supplies of food, clothing, and shelter; he can produce previously unimagined comforts of living. But along with these benefits, the recent changes have brought great imbalances in human living, and have accentuated many old ones. Human beings have not yet learned how to live in their new environment. They have not yet learned the ways to get equitable distribution of the new civilization's benefits, either intranationally or internationally.

In the post-war period ahead, those adjustments must and will be made. The free citizen, however, cannot drop the subject at that point. He has some serious questions on his mind: How shall the adjustments be made? What will they be? What methods will be used? What tools? These questions are fraught with significance to the future of democratic government, for preserving free institutions will require not only the working out of acceptable answers, but also continued public vigilance against any weakening of our democratic way of life. The future holds real threats to American democracy, and these threats must be guarded against. Since long before the outbreak of war, democracy and democratic institutions all over the world have been under fire. Some nations, although battered, have clung to their liberties and weathered the gale as best they could. The victory of democracy in World War II will temper the gale, but not tame it. The sea will still be rough, still be uncharted. Democratic governments will still face critical adjustments, including ones

they failed to make in pre-war days as well as those of post-war reconstruction.

New developments in social action and in social invention will be required of us in the period ahead. Society is marching through unfamiliar territory. In international affairs, we have moved from the relatively simple world of a few generations ago to a highly organized world, with each of its parts tied to the others by culture, transportation, trade, communication, finance, and even politics. In this new world, the lives of peasants in Kamchatka can be changed overnight by the acts of people in South Africa. The size of a wheat harvest, the opening of a mine, the closing of a factory in one part of the world can bring prosperity or ruin to people thousands of miles away. The world is tied together. Old possibilities of isolation are broken down. Men everywhere are next-door neighbors to each other. They now must learn how to live as neighbors.

Here in America, in the short space of a lifetime, the new changes have come thick and fast. Our expanding population, advances in mechanization and science, the settlement of the frontiers, the first World War, the depression, and now World War II—the roll is impressive. And each of these changes has created the necessity for many complex adjustments in individual lives and social institutions. Meanwhile, even before adjustments can get under way, additional changes flash on the screen.

Man has discovered new tools, new methods, new forces. He is now trying to master these unfamiliar tools and forces, without knowing too much of how to go about it. One thing he does know, however—that because of the complex nature of interlocking forces in this new en-

vironment, great care must be employed to avoid acts that will be injurious to him. To attempt to use his tools at all, therefore, man must call into play the very best knowledge and the most soundly conceived action he can obtain. Yet to do this, he must call upon the scientific specialist, and not simply upon the physical scientists, the chemists, the biologists, the physicists, but also upon the social scientists, the psychologists, the economists, the sociologists.

It would be a great mistake to undervalue the specialist. Without him, society could not function. In order to explore the ways in which society can make full use of his capacity, however, it is necessary to appraise with some exactness just what his place in society is. Nowadays it is impossible for the plain citizen, unaided, to know all of the facts about particular social and economic problems that are needed to arrive at judgments. To supply this knowledge when and where it is needed is the job of the specialists, each of whom devotes himself primarily to developing facts in a particular field. The specialist deliberately limits his view to a special field, in order to get an adequate measure of knowledge about it, and leaves to his fellows the job of working in the other fields. The specialist, serving society through his possession of concentrated knowledge, is today as necessary as the air we breathe.

The non-specialist usually recognizes the importance of the specialist's services. Frequently, in order to learn necessary facts about his personal problems, the non-expert must seek out the expert for himself. He knows he cannot rely merely upon common sense in answering questions as to his legal affairs, his health, or other critical matters.

Now, significantly for democratic institutions, men in the mass increasingly call upon experts for information and counsel in dealing with their new social and economic problems. The ordinary man could feel competent to answer these questions himself in the days when problems were simpler, but now effective social action upon problems in such fields as land tenure, finance, taxation, international trade, or even pensions for the aged, to name just a few, has to be predicated upon facts and advice supplied by experts.

Sheer efficiency in decision-making is one of the arguments Hitler used against the German people in favor of rule by all-wise individuals. Unlike Hitlerism, of course, democracy is concerned with efficiency in complete human terms, rather than physical terms alone. But then, so must all government be concerned. The truth of this fact undermines the whole structure of Hitlerism. In addition, the belief in all-wise individuals, or even groups of individuals, is fundamentally erroneous. Wisdom is a matter of orientation to environment. The environment of a people, as a whole, must necessarily differ from that of any individual or group within the whole. Individuals or groups, no matter how wise they may be in their own environments, can never be wise in the environment of the whole people. Only the people themselves can do that. All-wisdom, even in the most expert of experts, is therefore impossible.

The special knowledge of experts as experts, furthermore, is not universal. It has narrow and sharply defined limits. These limits are important, and must be kept in mind. The expert by definition is a man who gives the center of the stage to his own special subject. When he is



at work, he makes the whole world revolve around that core. No matter how broad his interests or how generous his personality, intensity of preoccupation with his own field of knowledge necessitates lack of attention to other fields. This, in turn, tends to isolate him from ordinary citizens, who know a little about many things but a great deal only about the universals that are important to all people. Many doors of understanding about the life patterns of people may thus be closed to the expert, doors that stand wide to the multitude not so preoccupied. Necessary though his knowledge is, therefore, it cannot begin to take the place of the common man's ordinary horse sense.

The expert's circumscribed world may insulate him from new views, and he may see his field in a position out of true relation to the whole. Insofar as he is confident of his own technical capacity, he may develop a certitude about his own conclusions and an impatience with the views of non-experts that must always be intolerable in political affairs. Confident knowledge of the physical facts of particular situations readily leads to overconfidence about factors that are even more crucial in the daily lives of the millions. Immersion within a fixed field, moreover, does not lead to flexibility of mind in the face of new situations. The specialist is not trained to adapt rapidly to new conditions. The opportunism required for practical concerns is alien to his function. And great as his knowledge is within his special field, once he goes outside that field, few men are so helpless. As Harold J. Laski has said, "The expert tends . . . to make his subject the measure of life instead of making life the measure of his subject. The result only too often is inability to discriminate, a confusion of learning with wisdom."

A wide gap stands between the expert and the ordinary individual. The expert tends to assume that, on matters within his specialty, his conclusions should be accepted without question as to their interrelationship with other factors and other views. That men should ask his reasons, argue about his facts, and arrive at different estimates of a situation sometimes irritates him. And all too often the expert views people as mere statistics, instead of living and breathing fellow beings. By the very nature of specialization, the expert is often barred from achieving the same generalized attitudes as the layman—manifestly an impossibility, since he has deliberately oriented himself to a special field of interest. The great value of the expert lies in his concentration upon his specialty, not in his attainment of a comprehensive view of life; the two positions, in fact, are almost mutually exclusive.

The great body of the people is the party of the first part in all human affairs. In government, the mass of the people is the ultimate consumer of policies and action just as truly as it is the ultimate consumer of bread, clothing, automobiles, or radios. The fundamental verity of democratic principles, in fact, reflects itself in the daily conduct of all kinds of activity within the nation.

In government, the citizen is the one who must decide the desirability of public policies and actions, and who must be satisfied. Under democracy, the citizen differs from the commercial customer, however, in that he is himself the chief stockholder in the great establishment of government. As a partner in the government as well as the ultimate consumer of its benefits, he cannot fail to participate in the making of decisions.

The citizen, true enough, may not know what technical

factors to consider in dealing with social maladjustments; he may not know what remedies to try or in what volume they should be applied; but he can and does have the important opinions about the desirability of alternative treatments. He may not understand the technicalities of surplus disposal, farm tenure problems, party prices, and so on, but he can and does have positive opinions about the desirable ways in which technical proposals can be applied. As the one who eats the cake, he is the best judge as to its palatability.

Democratic government demands that the citizen be a full partner with technician and administrator in the consultations and decision-making of the governmental process. To the extent that the citizen is not consulted, the process suffers. The mere goodwill or efficiency of the expert in doing his work cannot compensate for his failure to enlist the interest and enthusiasm of the common man. Such failure always will be reflected ultimately in friction and inefficiency. The expert must at all times rely upon the judgment of the common man, for, in the aggregate, the combined judgments of all citizens constitute the scheme of values that society goes by—the values that limit the possibilities of social action. In order to contribute effectively to democratic progress, therefore, the expert must strive to broaden that scheme of values wherever he believes it necessary, and he can do this only by broadening public understanding of his work.

To streamline itself against the stresses and problems of this age, democracy will have to insist upon active partnership between the citizen, the expert, and the administrator. Each of these has a contribution to make in the development of wise public plans and policies, and a fusion

of judgment upon what is desirable and undesirable is essential to modern government.

The part that American farm men and women have taken in molding agricultural policy and action has contributed materially to the more beneficial operation of public programs. In addition, it has also contributed valuably to the health of American democracy. Testimonial to this fact is the sweeping range of agricultural and semi-agricultural problems, hard to reach through democratic action, that have been brought nearer solution. Through this process, the cooperation of farm people and farm experts has been established in definite channels, so that the best knowledge of laymen, experts, and administrators could be employed in attacking farm problems.

The significance of this advance in democracy is by no means limited to agriculture. The same fundamental barriers to full democracy exist in industry, finance, and commerce. Every part of our economy has an obligation to help remove such barriers. A closer look at the implications of democratic devices in agriculture for bringing the layman and the expert into working partnership will show that they are instruments which, with modifications, offer promise of usefulness in many fields besides the agricultural.

### *Agricultural Economists in a Democracy at War*

The changing tides of attitude toward social responsibility on the part of scientists runs almost through the whole gamut of sciences. When physical scientists have shied away from the risks involved in becoming advocates, social scientists ordinarily have shied at least as forcibly. When social scientists as a whole have praised that metallic

virtue, objectivity, then economists usually have been found dedicated to similar admiration of the ivory tower. To a considerable extent, this holds good of that subdivision of the economist's profession which confines itself to agricultural matters. Yet perhaps the very fact that they were committed to a profession which was devoted to the study of a more than usually distressed population led agricultural economists into an active relationship with practicality a little more quickly than was the case with economists in general.

With this qualification, the experience of agricultural economists may be briefly surveyed with some profit. Now that war has drawn us into swirling currents of activity, "pure research" more than ever finds itself on the defensive. In time of peace it is much easier to make out a case for the disinterested researcher whose delvings may be pursued endlessly without question as to whether his work ever results in any finding that may be put to practical uses by fellow men. In war this can hardly be afforded. "The general welfare" is more than ever paramount, and people are not too patient when the connection between research and the general welfare is tenuous. Precise definition of "the general welfare" is difficult, but doubtless most people would agree with Henry A. Wallace's peacetime statement that "from the material point of view . . . the general welfare consists of a steady, balanced increase in the production of physical goods more evenly distributed among all the people, but not so distributed as to destroy the initiative upon which the incentive for wealth production is based." That definition may be endorsed in the recognition that there are aspects of life which cannot be brought under the measuring rod of money or reduced

to physical quantities. Marshall never tired of pointing out that the study of wealth is only a part of economics. On its other, and more important, side it is "a part of the study of man . . . for man's character has been moulded by his everyday work."

There is a small group of economists who believe that economics is not directly concerned with welfare at all. According to one of them, Lionel C. Robbins, of the University of London, "Economics . . . is concerned with that aspect of behavior which arises from the scarcity of means to achieve given ends." However, "Economics is not concerned with ends as such," and particularly "is *not* concerned with the causes of material welfare as such." The bulk of the economists, and there are no major exceptions among the agricultural economists, regard the advancement of the public welfare, at least on its material side, as the ultimate object of their endeavors. As J. M. Clark has said, "Humanity will derive answers to its practical problems from the work of the economists, whether the work of the economists is intended for that purpose or not." There is seldom agreement on the question of how to contribute most effectively to the public welfare.

There are many shades of disagreement, but roughly speaking there are three principal groupings of agricultural economists, insofar as concerns means of action. Those in the first group believe that the functions of the economist do not extend beyond the point of expounding and developing theory, compiling and interpreting data, describing existing economic institutions, and appraising action programs. The ideas of this group appear to be rooted in either or both of two assumptions. The first is that the

economist cannot fulfill his function unless he is completely objective. The attainment of this happy state appears to involve no affiliation with private business enterprises; and although it does permit employment by endowed institutions of repute and the drawing of salaries out of public funds, it looks askance at active participation in the action programs of public agencies. The second assumption is that of the inherent superiority of individual action, guided primarily by the pressure of market price, over any form of economic planning in which government participates. Strangely enough, this postulate is frequently subject to important exceptions. Along with general skepticism about the effectiveness and competence of civil servants in economic affairs, and a paean to competition, it is not unusual to find approval of rather drastic measures such as substantial redistribution of income through progressive income taxes, strong central banking policy, and extensive regulation of industry and commerce in the light of the goals enshrined in the Sherman Anti-Trust Law and the Clayton Act. In other words, a planned economy is bad *unless* it is a planned *laissez-faire*.

Another group, which is closely related to the first, includes those who are theoretically in favor of a more active participation by the economists in the practical affairs of government, who would delay this participation until they have developed a complete framework of theory, accumulated and analyzed a larger mass of statistics, and have undergone a supergraduate training in schools of social engineering which are yet to be. They do not want to start until they have all the right answers. Although this segment is on the whole more favorable to group action than is the first, they exhibit an underlying

distrust of such action. There is a fear that the losses may be greater than the gains, a reluctance to have to resort in any large degree to trial and error and perhaps a hope that they can construct outside the maelstrom of social forces a system that is universally valid, and when ultimately applied will be virtually certain of success.

Finally, there are those who believe direct participation in the actual public process is necessary and even welcome. There are, of course, some divergent opinions on the extent of this participation. Some would engage in the formulation of action programs, but go no further; others are willing to participate actively in the carrying out of plans and to give consideration to non-economic factors, in other words to function as social engineers. The general position of this group has been effectively stated by Wesley Mitchell in a discussion of public planning for public programs: "Anyone who attempts to check the practice of national planning will argue in vain. As long as men have power to think, private citizens will go on devising plans for what they find amiss in social organization, and some of their plans will win general approval. Also, as long as we continue to encounter national emergencies from time to time our government will go on adopting hurried measures. The course of wisdom is not to oppose national planning, but to make that planning more intelligent." The assumptions underlying the position of this group include a belief in the persistence of problems which cannot be met by action within the framework of *laissez-faire* economics, the inevitability of irresistible public demands for action on these problems, the belief that technical competence on the part of economists is more necessary than a Jovian detachment from the pressure of



events, and a belief that this competence can be attained only if a substantial number of economists are in direct contact with the knotty problems of their generation.

Many of the differences between these three groups arise from overstressing special points of view rather than from irreconcilable philosophies. Those in the first two groups perform an important service in keeping before their colleagues and the general public the necessity of developing more effective theoretical analysis, improving statistical techniques, expanding research, appraising plans and programs, and keeping long-run considerations always in view. It is obvious that certain phases of economics are best developed through reflection and research under conditions removed from the ebb and flow of public opinion, the thrust of pressure groups, and the harassing details of administration. Such work is of high value. It is to be hoped that under the stresses of war, the pendulum does not swing so far as to do real damage to the framework for disinterested research built up in this country over many years. In their devotion to the more detached phases of their discipline, however, economists sometimes lose sight of the essential interconnections between theory, research, and public policy. In their quest for certitude, in their dissatisfaction with partial answers, they often underestimate the light which they could throw upon current issues if they would but grapple with them. There is urgent need in wartime and in peace for a recognition of the necessary connections between theory, statistics, research, and public policy, and for a recognition of responsibility for the solution of the pressing problems whose existence created the positions which many of them hold, in government and college halls alike.

*The Administrator in a Democracy*

So much for generalizations. There are two aspects of this matter of keeping government democratic when the broad legislative mandates of Congress are translated into the particularities of operation of particular programs. In the execution of those broad mandates, the great national governmental programs need to be administered to meet the real needs of real people, not the calculated "average" needs of "average" citizens.

In other words, the administrator, on the one hand, needs to be able to call upon the expert in order to make sure his administration is democratic. On the other hand, the citizen who is drawn directly into the governmental process, who participates in the operation of a program through membership say, on an AAA committee or in its formulation through his membership on an agricultural planning committee, needs to call upon experts for a variety of services in order to make sure his participation is informed participation.

For clarity of discussion, let us consider these two aspects of the specialist's usefulness separately. Outstanding among the ways in which expert knowledge and techniques have been put to the service of democracy is the developing use of "sampling" of opinions and attitudes. The Gallup polls of the American Institute of Public Opinion have familiarized most people with the general idea of selective interviewing. Not many know that government has tried to keep in touch with opinion through formal channels.

The reasons for this development have been given as follows by Rensis Likert, director of the work in the

Bureau of Agricultural Economics, where it has been more fully carried out than elsewhere in government:

"A few decades ago, many of the present functions and agencies of Government in the United States did not exist. The great increase in the complexity of Government in modern times tends to make it less rather than more democratic. For one thing, the legislation enacted by the Congress has of necessity become more general. It is virtually impossible, for instance, to draft legislation that is highly specific and have it meet satisfactorily the great variety of conditions that exist between the potato farms of Maine and the irrigated truck farms of California's Imperial Valley. As legislation has become more general, those charged with its execution have been given more and more freedom of action. Instead of executing specific legislative orders, they have been required increasingly to make decisions of their own in order to achieve in local situations the intent of the Congress as expressed in the legislation it has enacted. Yet they have had no practical way of learning how the people desired particular legislation to be carried out. A referendum on this point would have been prohibitively costly; moreover, it would frequently have taken too much time.

"Under these circumstances the administrator had no alternative but to select the particular lines of action which, in his judgment and that of his advisers, would be soundest and most nearly in keeping with what appeared to be the desires of the greatest number of people.

"This trend away from democracy resulting from the increased responsibility thrust upon administrators need not be continued and in fact can be reversed by using methods developed in recent years in the social sciences.

These methods make it possible for administrators to find out quickly, accurately, and at very little expense precisely how the citizens of this country or any section of it desire to have any particular act of the Congress administered.

"Recently the Department of Agriculture, through a small staff of specialists, has started securing for administrators the information needed to make decisions in accordance with the desires of the people. It is now possible, for example, for the Agricultural Adjustment Administration to secure information on how farmers in various parts of the country want the Agricultural Adjustment Administration program for a particular commodity conducted; or for the Farm Security Administration to learn how the farmers in a given locality want the tenant-purchase plan operated; or for the Soil Conservation Service to find out what assistance farmers in eroded areas desire in carrying out a conservation program.

"The method used in obtaining information on these or other issues is what is known as 'sampling.' It consists in asking questions of a relatively small group of farmers carefully selected so that they will be representative of all farmers. In this way the information needed can be secured much more quickly and at much less cost than is possible through referenda or any other procedure. In fact, the method is the only one now known for securing this kind of information accurately, rapidly, and inexpensively enough to be practicable."

As a practicing psychologist, however, Dr. Likert warns that the technique "must be used in a careful, scientific manner, and all the checks and safeguards that research has shown to be necessary must be adhered to rigorously."

But if this is done, then "surprisingly accurate results can be obtained from relatively small samples of interviews with farmers." Under such a system a sampling of the views held by 1000 farmers on a specific question "will yield results in which any error due to the size of the sample will not exceed 5 per cent." In other words, if all farmers had been questioned, the results would have been the same within 5 per cent.

The conversion of the social sciences from peacetime to wartime uses is well illustrated by the results in this field since the United States became an active belligerent. The Office of Facts and Figures, since become a part of the Office of War Information, made notable progress in building on the foundation just described. R. Keith Kane, assistant director of the Bureau of Intelligence in the then OFF, has told of that agency's work:

"Before Pearl Harbor the Department of Agriculture had gone further than any other agency in systematically probing the minds of the public on vital issues. For example, methods developed under the Division of Program Surveys in the Bureau of Agricultural Economics made it possible for the information and policy officials of the Department of Agriculture to find out quickly and accurately how farmers in a certain area felt about the 'Food for Freedom goals.' The reports indicated that farmers were somewhat hesitant about increasing production because of the uncertainty as to the future of prices for their products. The Information Office accordingly changed the character of its program with a view toward eliminating this uncertainty.

"Among the private agencies which were helping the government in this field of public opinion analysis were

the Fortune Poll, which had shown the way in exploring some of the areas of greatest public need, the Gallup Poll, and other well-known market research and polling agencies. In addition, certain industrial and utility corporations had placed some of their studies in public opinion and content analysis at the disposal of the government. Many privately financed experimental studies were also under way and available to the government. These included the War Communications Research Project at the Library of Congress, the Kris project at the New School of Social Research, the Office of Radio Research at Columbia University, the Princeton Listening Center, the Office of Public Opinion Research at Princeton, the American Film Center, to name only a few. Some of these projects were exceedingly useful to government officials. The country was edging closer to war, and surveys based on interviewing of cross-sections of the population indicated that the policies of the Administration in foreign affairs were meeting general acceptance despite the activities of the America First groups.

"Against this background, it is not surprising that when the Office of Facts and Figures was established thought should have been given at once to the research facilities that were already available to the government for policy guidance. The need for investigating the areas in which the public lacked knowledge about the great defense problems was recognized immediately."

Dr. Likert's conclusion as to the purpose of this way of using psychological knowledge is of peculiar interest at this point. Remarking that it "represents an inexpensive and satisfactory way to help make administration more democratic," he adds: "It should enable administrators to

fit national legislation to local conditions and adapt it to the problems created by the continually changing world in which we live. It is important that the administration of any farm program be carried out in the way desired by most farmers and that the farmers themselves determine the rapidity with which existing procedures shall be changed. Sudden or drastic changes rarely meet with approval and usually confuse the individual. The rapid changes that occur in the modern world represent one of the most serious threats to the future of our democracy. Effective yet democratic methods must be found that will permit adjustments to these bewildering changes. The developments described . . . give evidence of being important steps toward a solution of this crucial problem."

### *The Expert and 1943 War Production*

This is but one, and perhaps the most obvious, of the ways whereby administrators of public programs can make use of the advances of science in order to assure the fullest possible democracy in operation. There are manifold others. Of special, concrete importance to us in the war is another effort that deserves more than passing mention. This is the method used in 1942 by the Department of Agriculture to appraise the country's production capacity, agriculturally speaking, in preparation for another year of war.

A prime national requisite to successful prosecution of the war is full agricultural production. Many obstacles must be overcome if that goal is to be reached. The country has primary need of its manpower for the military services, and no man knows how great that demand ultimately will be. It has need, next, of its manpower to

supply the direct needs of the military forces. But beyond those two imperative national demands are others that are less imperative only because less immediate. To keep the economy of the country functioning as it must function to meet those two major demands, other millions of workers are required. As producers, farmers of the country are adversely affected by all of these drains, yet they must do the biggest job they have ever been asked to do. In addition to the fact that, as the war wears on, there will be less manpower available for farm work, other difficulties to achieving full production must be overcome. Ships must be used for pressing military purposes, and consequently some fertilizer ingredients cannot be imported. The bulk of the country's metal must go into arms; therefore the supply of new farm machinery must be curtailed. Transportation facilities will be strained, as will processing and storage facilities. These are but a few of the hurdles that farmers must take.

The need for full production is a national need, and the problems involved in getting it are national problems. Yet it is not enough to add up figures and say that if farmers are to grow so many bushels of corn or so many acres of peanuts, then so much machinery or such and such an amount of fertilizer must be available. In this sense, the national production and the national obstacles to full production are not at all just the sum of the production and the obstacles in each of the 3075 rural counties of the United States.

The only way these terms have meaning is locality by locality. That is to say, the impacts of war upon the large commercial truck farm will be very different from those on the cash grain farm or on the 80-acre, largely sub-



sistence farm on a southern upland. In order to get full production it is necessary to know intimately what each locality *can* produce to advantage in the light of the national needs, what crops each locality can shift out of and into production, what handicaps there are in each locality to getting the most from that locality.

On the other hand, the provision of a force of experts big enough to go into every farming section of the United States to find out such problems is utterly impracticable. Even if it were practicable, moreover, the conclusions such experts would reach might be wide of the mark if they were not based on and inclusive of the views of farmers themselves in the localities visited by the experts. In such a situation, the Department, through the Bureau of Agricultural Economics, devised a method of work that leaned heavily upon both agricultural technicians and farmers.

Teams of these technicians from both state and Federal forces were formed. They already had available to them the fruits of considerable research and of much cooperation with farmers. Using this material, the administrators and the technicians outlined what they called "adjustment areas" in each state. Then areas were selected in which it seemed clear that production possibilities and difficulties were typical of wider areas, perhaps even of whole regions. These typical or nearly typical areas, of from 4 to 8 counties in extent, were then made the laboratory, the workshop, where the economic and social materials of the 1943 agricultural war program were developed.

A team of technicians, representing as nearly as possible the several special skills in agricultural science, then went into each typical area. There they met with limited groups

of farmers generally known to represent their communities. The experts would contribute the knowledge they brought with them concerning the needs of the nation, the situation in other regions, what was known as scientific fact about the locality where the meeting was held. The farmers would throw into this common pool their knowledge of their neighbors' farms and of local conditions, the expertness in practical matters that arises from making a living from the soil. In such county-by-county discussions, where these two kinds of experience and knowledge were matched, the framework of a program was hammered out. The result has been a program that will enable the farmers of the nation to make a far greater contribution to victorious war, and at far less social cost, than would have been the case otherwise.

For the material developed by using specialists in this way enabled the administrators of the national farm programs to lay down the lines of their program for 1943 in confidence that they were taking into account the thousandfold local possibilities and obstacles to success. Moreover, they knew that they were working on lines that had the approval of the people who had the job of actually producing. That is the kind of extension of democracy in administration that proper use of the expert makes possible.

### *The Uses of Cultural Anthropology*

Both scientists and administrators have barely made a start toward a day-to-day working liaison. The advent of war either interrupted wholly or restricted many activities that looked toward a more workable relationship. As yet, these suspended peacetime steps have not been suc-

ceeded by wholly satisfactory wartime steps of a similar character. Yet the liaison between scientist and administrator is even more gravely needed in time of war than in peace. As the nation moves farther into all-out phases, it is to be hoped that there will be a further development of the kind of partnership that the Department of Agriculture started in 1939 with a series of conferences of administrators with representatives of each of the major social science disciplines. "A principal hope" of these meetings, said a Department publication, "was to find out how the social sciences might contribute to the union of democratic procedures and scientific methods in the development of agricultural planning and policy-making, and in the educational and research activities of the Department."

This quotation is from a transcript of the discussion that took place between cultural anthropologists and Department officials in this series. Few of the social sciences would appear, offhand, to promise less in the way of solving the swiftly changing difficulties of an administrator sweating through the harassments of his day's work. Worth repeating here, therefore, to emphasize the fruitfulness to scientist and official alike of such contact is the concluding exchange between Dean Robert Redfield of the University of Chicago, and M. L. Wilson, then Under-Secretary of Agriculture:

DEAN REDFIELD: "We know that within an integrated culture people must have something to live for as well as things to live with. That is simple, and vastly important. We know that an integrated culture includes both a variety, and a balance, of cultural activities. We know that to the people within the culture in question, having something to live *for*, having a variety and balance of

institutionalized activities, and having all of these fairly well integrated into a way of life, is vitally important. But that does not mean we oppose change, nor does it mean we don't know change occurs. It simply means, I believe, that we have an idea of the ramifications of what may superficially seem a simple, single alteration.

"If as cultural anthropologists we have any peculiar virtues as advisers in matters of reform planning or administration, it would come from the perception of the configuration that men's activities tend to become. I take it from what was said this morning that difficulties in planning and administration generally arise out of these phases that are not considered, frequently because it is not realized that these other phases are really concerned. This inter-relatedness may very properly be considered a special concern of the cultural anthropologist. So I think it is proper to believe he can reasonably be called on for advice. But his advice must be specific advice, for a specific situation with which he is thoroughly familiar. There may be a few cases now where an anthropologist already knows a specific situation well enough to give competent scientific counsel. But ordinarily he would have to make a special study, for his field of competence is the local cultural unit, and these differ almost infinitely. The precise nature, scope and depth of the requisite study would be determined by the nature of the problem.

UNDER-SECRETARY WILSON: "It is getting late, and we must adjourn this session now. But before we go I want to ask unanimous consent to repeat something Dean Redfield just said, and I hope the stenographers will underline it. *Within an integrated culture—and that means a culture that offers the chance for satisfactory living and the*

*flowering of individual capacities and happiness—people must have something to live for, as well as things to live with.* As a matter of philosophical understanding, that can't be emphasized too much, and as we try to coordinate our general philosophy with our daily life and work, it can't be applied too much, either.

"Today we've talked in pretty general terms. That has been necessary, and I think we've gained in general understanding from it. We've proceeded far enough to realize, I believe, that a general point of view is crucially important, but also that the manner of handling specific problems must necessarily be individualized with the various individual problems. We can't expect to get any pat answers to specific problems right here and right now. The next question before us seems to be to find some way of articulating what cultural anthropology can offer with the administration of action programs. That may mean some new research, and some new administrative devices. It may mean a little education, too—education for all of us."

The report in which the conclusions of this meeting were summarized and suggestions made for a future working liaison shows the virtue to both administrator and scientist of struggling with common problems:

"The discussion brought out that this group of cultural anthropologists do not regard themselves, as scientists, as concerned with the fixing of objectives. Application of the viewpoint may be expected to improve and to organize knowledge as to how to reach objectives or as to how proposed action programs are tending to reach, or may be expected to reach, objectives otherwise defined.

"If cultural anthropology is to contribute effectively to

a balanced attack on problems of agriculture, this contribution must be through making available the concepts, methods and data of the cultural anthropologists. . . .

"Means must also be considered for giving to the work of the cultural anthropologists a convincing reality in terms of specific problems of rural life. Because anthropological research has not been directly concerned with such problems, various possible ways for reorienting existing research findings and for assuring adequate new research on agricultural questions must be developed. In this connection, the following suggestions are offered:

"(1) Since administrators must make judgments promptly as occasion demands, it is obviously impossible to undertake special research every time some action question is up for decision. Whenever such decision involves changes in customary patterns of behavior, the possibility that the accumulated store of anthropological knowledge may have some conclusions of fact or interpretation bearing on the problem may be examined. The question is here raised whether provision might not well be made for the preparation of working memoranda, bringing together significant anthropological material as a part of regular administrative procedure when justified by the nature of the problem facing the administrator.

"(2) There is reason to believe that research on rural cultural problems may be planned so that a body of significant data and some knowledge of cultural relationships may be built up in anticipation of administrative needs."

The report then suggested types of research to be undertaken. One type was "a series of studies of communities as culturally integrated whole." "For example," the com-

mittee said, "it would be possible to compare communities of divergent ethnic origin, communities in which different agricultural projects had been initiated, or communities otherwise differentiated by some outstanding characteristic, in an effort to achieve a better understanding of the role of interrelated cultural factors in the success or failure of the people in terms of U.S.D.A. goals." Others suggested were research "aimed directly at some definite aspect of social behavior." For illustration, the committee said, "it might be feasible and useful to study agricultural techniques and tools as a part of culture, or to examine family structure and function in relation to a proposed rehabilitation project." A final kind of research proposed was "pilot studies." These were to be "of a relatively simple nature and on a small, inexpensive scale, in the hope that they would serve as guides for further work by personnel not trained in anthropology." Emphasis was to be on the collection of data "susceptible to objective and accurate treatment by professionally untrained workers."

### *The Farmer Does a Social Science Chore*

Bridging the gap between layman and expert is a job that has many facets. A clue to one of the most important of these is contained in the recommendations made by the committee just quoted, the recommendation for establishment of simple scientific procedures to be carried out by untrained workers. Here again there are instructive precedents from the work of the Department of Agriculture, precedents that will be found increasingly useful for total war. If the degree to which total war is successful is the degree to which the energy of all citizens is en-

listed in its prosecution, then any device that enables scientific knowledge to be applied on broader scales is a genuine contribution to victory.

In several ways, agricultural work has set patterns in peace that will be useful in war. For one example, when the local agricultural planning work was instituted it was found that farmers could be very successful in applying the simpler techniques of the land economist. This discovery was made from the necessity for appraising, county by county and community by community, the ways in which land was being used, whether such uses were good or bad, and what should be done to change the patterns of use. Agricultural planning necessarily started with the land itself and the people on the land. This was felt to be basic to the development of any public or private action to deal with either local or national problems. Yet it was not possible to send a land economist or other social scientist into each of the 3075 rural counties. There just weren't that many land economists, for one thing. For another, such an attack would have negated the very conception of participation by laymen in planning, because it would have tended toward the building up of a tremendous bureaucracy.

Consequently, the Department again was forced to turn to the people themselves, to the farmers. The state and Federal scientists who knew the techniques of drawing land-use maps were sent into the field to sit down with local people and show them how these maps were drawn. These people in turn passed on the information to their neighbors. The result was that within a few months very excellent land-use maps of the counties where the farmers had wrestled with their problems began to be



available for both the lay and official people interested in improving agricultural programs and agriculture itself. A vast reservoir of knowledge about the use of land and methods of improving its use began to build up, a reservoir that could not otherwise have been accumulated over many times the period it took to get it together.

That is one result of bringing scientist and layman closer together. The expert himself benefits far beyond expectation from directing his research to specific ends. His own work is far more fruitful, even from the standpoint of pure science, than if he works in a vacuum, and the base of his profession is broadened immeasurably.

For more detailed illustration of this point, it will be well to examine what has been called in the Department of Agriculture the "community delineation" work devised by sociologists. "Community delineation" means the marking out of true communities and neighborhoods. Frequently, the formal boundaries of communities are artificial. They correspond more to maps than they do to the life of the persons who live in and about them. By using the natural meeting places of communities as the focal points for the participation of people in community action, whether in support of national, state, or local action, their action is rendered far more effective than it would otherwise be. For the war effort, this is an important matter.

Perhaps the best way to illustrate the kind of cooperation that develops between scientist and layman, and between administrator, scientist, and layman, is to quote from a letter written by a Department of Agriculture social scientist who had been engaged in this work in Mississippi. On his departure he wrote the state and Fed-

eral leaders who were responsible for getting the work going in Mississippi that he had "thoroughly enjoyed (his) work with each of you in the various counties of the State," and then went over some of their problems in extending the work that had been started.

After recommending that the district workers get a copy "of the April 9 edition of the Oxford, Mississippi, Eagle" and to use "the map on page 12 . . . in getting the idea over to county workers," this technician gave these words of advice:

"Let me remind you that our job in the preparation of the neighborhood and community map is to find and map the neighborhoods as they exist. We should not set up any arbitrary number of families as the requirement for a neighborhood, though in the selection of neighborhood leaders or the organization of discussion groups it may be desirable to make a further breakdown within some of the larger neighborhoods, based on walking distance or some other convenient division.

"I believe your most troublesome problem in the work in the counties, and the one on which the county workers will require the most help from you, will be the determination of the community boundaries. This should not be too difficult if the neighborhood information sheets have been carefully filled in, but there will be a tendency on the part of the county workers to regard as community centers every place where they have held meetings, or every consolidated school. In most counties the mapping process will undoubtedly disclose a number of neighborhoods that should be recognized as such and should have their own meetings on matters that need to be discussed with all the families, but on the other hand neighborhood rep-

representatives can just as easily and even more naturally come together in fewer centers than are now being used in many counties.

"Most neighborhoods will be found to be clearly attached to one community center or another. A few neighborhoods in each county will be divided in their community affiliations. In most such cases careful consideration will disclose that the majority of the families feel more closely attached to one community center than to any other. For practical purposes it is desirable to consider such neighborhoods as wholly within one community or another and to map them that way, though it is recognized that for a few families in the neighborhood this may not represent the most pronounced associational tendency.

"We should keep in mind, too, that sometimes a community may have no one center. The consolidated school for the whole area may be at one point, the trade center for the same area at another, and other community facilities elsewhere. Sometimes, too, two or three neighborhoods may associate with each other but have few or no ties with any outside center and no common center in either neighborhood. Such a group of neighborhoods would constitute the equivalent of a community even though there were no one center and no one name. As a community it might be necessary or desirable to refer to it by both names, such as the Union-Shady Grove Community or the Pisgah-Hebron-Pleasant Hill Community."

Alongside this description of how the work was to be done, let us place some words about its result by Henry L. Jones, county agent for Webster County, Mississippi.

Mr. Jones is secretary also of the Department of Agriculture War Board, described earlier in this book, the administrative set-up of agricultural officials through which the Secretary of Agriculture is executing locally his Department's share of the war effort.

"Our former system of holding regular community meetings," said Mr. Jones, "did not reach a large percentage of our small farmers and tenants who had no means, or poor means, of transportation. The neighborhood discussion group plan will place information within walking distance of practically all farm families.

"This organization in the County is by no means complete. To date, forty-seven community neighborhood groups have been set up and local leaders elected by the people. At least 60% of these are having meetings monthly. Some of those that have been attended by the writer, on invitation, show considerable interest being taken and the idea seems to be meeting the approval of local people and we have had reports from a number of individuals of the organized groups stating that the people in general are well impressed with this method of disseminating information.

"It will be the policy of members of the War Board and agricultural leaders in general to use the neighborhood groups as a medium through which to effectuate the various phases of their programs. Agricultural leaders will in the course of their daily tasks, visit local leaders and check up with them on the progress and general conditions in the neighborhoods and communities.

"A County Map has been practically completed delineating the communities and all of the well-defined

neighborhoods, and as groups are being organized and set up neighborhoods are being sub-divided according to the opinions and views of the families in the groups. Our County Map to date shows twenty-eight well-defined neighborhoods with fifteen to twenty sub-neighborhood delineations. When this map is completed and a write-up for each neighborhood, it will be submitted to the Bureau of Agricultural Economics at State College, Mississippi, and a copy of the map will be prepared for each of the agricultural agencies represented in the County to be used by them in carrying out the different programs of work.

"It is the opinion of practically all of the paid agricultural workers in the County that the community neighborhood group set up is going to enable them to work more closely together, more effectively reach farm people with needed information, and result in an economic saving to both the farm people and the agricultural workers, and reach important goals more quickly."

If this kind of work is multiplied over many counties, its significance to winning the war becomes evident. In Webster County, the people in the neighborhoods met and elected a leader who, says Mr. Jones, "was charged with the responsibility of taking information from the War Board to the people, and giving a report back to the War Board relative to attendance, subject discussed, and general conditions pertaining to the war effort." The leaders also "are encouraged to place" before the War Board "any matters of importance that need attention in the neighborhood." That is one way that democracy can beat totalitarianism at its own boasted efficiency, for such democratic energizing of war exertions is far more efficient than any dictatorial system.

*Totalitarian vs. Democratic Uses of Experts*

The development of the procedure for "sampling" of attitudes described earlier in this chapter has been, like all scientific advances, the product of many minds over many years. Indeed, one of the basic concepts of the mathematical method which has shown the probability of error involved in such sampling, and therefore has made it possible for administrators to rely on the findings, derives from a formula developed by the Swiss scientist, Jacob Bernoulli, more than 200 years ago. All scientists build on the work of their predecessors. This is another fact that invests the scientist's calling with a public responsibility. Every scientist in some sense subscribes to a Hippocratic oath when he begins the practice of his profession. One shudders, in the light of such a premise, to think of the uses to which scientific knowledge has been put by totalitarianism.

It is of some interest that during the terrific stresses of the last decade, Pitirim A. Sorokin of Harvard has developed his theory that men are passing from what he terms a "Sensate" to an "Ideational" culture, by which Dr. Sorokin means that the race is moving from a period when the conquest of nature is its chief end to one in which humane values, the control of man by himself (which is in ultimate nothing but the theory of democracy) is the chief end.

"Mankind should be grateful to the Sensate culture for its wonderful achievements," Dr. Sorokin says in the conclusion to one of his monumental volumes. "But now when it is in agony; when its product is poison gas rather than fresh air; when through its achievements it has given

into man's hands terrific power over nature and the social and cultural world, without providing him with self-control, with power over his emotions and passions, sensate appetites and lusts—now, in the hands of such a man, with all its achievements of science and technology, it is becoming increasingly dangerous to mankind itself and to all its values. And for the same reasons for which a bomb or gun in the hands of a child or an imbecile is dangerous for himself and for others.”

The question of agreement with Dr. Sorokin's whole thesis is not involved here, except insofar as his words provide a description of what happens when expert knowledge is used without regard to society's needs. Mankind cannot afford many more victories of science that ignore moral or ethical values.

Referring to German preparation for war, the Committee for National Morale has said that “the Nazis mobilized German psychology and made it into an integral part of their political machine.” “The High Command of Germany's armed forces has gone even beyond that,” the Committee adds. “Today it uses defensive psychology to select the best man for the right place, to bolster the morale of the whole German ‘nation in arms,’ to habituate its soldiers to the hazards, dangers and strains of technical warfare, to cushion the shocks of combat, and increase the efficiency of military life, to regulate relations between officers and men, and to solve all the complex problems of human behavior raised by war. Offensive psychology is used to break down the morale of Germany's enemies both on the military and the home fronts, to conquer public opinion in neutral lands, to pave the invader's way into unprepared countries by disintegrating the political,

social, and intellectual structure of nations singled out for future attacks."

Any man who cherishes human values finds it hard to phrase his reaction to the wholesale perversion of knowledge and achievement that is indicated in that quotation. Those who believe in democracy, and in the use of knowledge for the advancement of the race, can but compare this rape of the researcher's brain with the rape of towns like Lidice. This is the ultimate point reached to date in the use of the talents of specialists to promote the desires of the few; it is the full negation of the concept that the possession of special knowledge is, like the occupancy of public office, a public trust. It may confer upon its owner a power that is denied to the average man. The great masses of average men, therefore, cannot allow such knowledge to dominate them at their own expense.

But if it is important for the average man to understand the ramified ways in which experts can change the course of his daily life, then it is equally important to the expert, the scientist himself, that he understand fully the perilous pathway upon which he sets out when he is indifferent to the democratic tenets. He is a man, after all, just as other men, and in the long run no man can live happily in whatever kind of ivory tower. However much he may consider himself distinct, each man is linked with unbreakable bonds to the others of his kind. This is a truth nearly obscured in the countries that led the march of mechanical progress during the last century. This war has been a jolting reminder of the essential kinship of all human beings.

In the United States now are thousands of visible reminders of what happens to the scientists, the creative minds, the artists, when the knowledge of their craft is



subverted to the uses of Hitlers. Most of the refugee scientists and experts among us now, however, are men and women who *did* realize what was happening both to them and to the science or art they practiced. Their trouble was that they did not have numerous enough company to make their stand against tyranny effective. From this, it may be inferred, too, that it is not enough to believe passively in democracy and human values. It is necessary for the expert to cherish these values so dearly that he will fight for them, and to try to relate his fight with that of common humanity against the same evils. He will need allies. Parenthetically, it may be said that Americans are under deep debt to the men and women who have sought refuge here. Many of them fought our fight long ago, even before most of us in this country were sure of the issues. Too, they have brought to us a devotion to the essential American tradition and beliefs that the country may welcome, reminding us as it does of the shining names of Lafayette, van Steuben, Pulaski, and the other alien heroes of the American Revolution.

# IX

## A Democratic Peace

"... To cleanse the world of ancient evils, ancient ills."  
—PRESIDENT ROOSEVELT.

The absolute thinkers, those who refuse to deal in the contingencies of reality, have rarely appeared to worse advantage than in the two decades that began in 1918. Then was the time when, for instance, economists of many kinds and brands had a field day of argument over the United States' "position as a creditor nation," over the "hidden subsidies of the tariff," over "the use economy versus the exchange economy," and a hundred other involutions of theory. It is easy to see now that events were paying as little attention to their theories as some of them were paying to events.

What was true of economists was likewise true of many other scientists. Even political science itself, that discipline which of all others should adjust its precepts to behavior and event, was guilty. But meanwhile politics, in the sense of people trying to get themselves elected and to govern so as to represent as nearly as possible the whole of a people, and economics as represented in the efforts of people to get a living, moved on as always past the abstractions of the theoreticians. When the great economic crash of 1929 arrived, therefore, and even more when the great

political crash of 1932 arrived, a brilliant white light was thrown upon the "fundamental principles" worked out in ivory towers of all kinds.

The previous chapter has been a discussion of the error into which experts would lead people if experts alone could wield power, and a discussion of ways in which the citizen and the expert can team up to guide each other. Necessarily, that discussion was devoted to application of such ideas in this country. Yet the lesson holds good for international dealings as well as for intra-national. It is a strange paradox that a supposedly scientific economic principle can be repeated so often, and so often identified with individual desires, that it takes on moral overtones. Such is the statement, for example, that free trade is the ideal toward which international economic relationships should tend. Some advocates of free trade inclined ultimately to brand as bad men those who did not believe it would solve most of the ills of the world. As a matter of fact, of course, any kind of trade, free or controlled, great or small, has nothing whatever to do with moral values. Trade is simply the way goods get to and from people who want to exchange things with each other. Free trade itself can be as much a weapon of economic conquest as can a closed protective tariff system plus dumping or subsidy.

In any event, the fact that some people think one kind of action ought to be taken and others believe not, has nothing to do with ultimate moral values. The absurdity to which such courses of thinking lead casts some doubt on that icy "objectivity" which is supposed to accompany the deliberations of the cloistered thinkers. In the long run, they have, along with their brother humans, a very strong

tendency to label those who disagree with them as not only mistaken but as unworthy. A great virtue of democracy is that it rubs together ideas, as well as people, and teaches the fallibility and limitations of one man's brain. Just as it permits no domination politically by a single leader, so it seeks common agreement in matters of reason and leans powerfully upon the ability of the higher truth to draw the majority to its support.

It is, of course, very doubtful whether one-sided theories of experts or anyone else had anything to do with plunging the world into the depression of the late twenties and early thirties or into the present terrible World War. Presumption would reach great heights that pinned on any one group of men much responsibility for the world's state of affairs. It may be said, however, that neither the scientists as a whole nor the politicians as a whole did a great deal toward helping the world to avoid its present accumulations of woe. Even more important, it may also be said that such recovery as was made from the great depression was due to a marriage—somewhat belated—of true minds between expert and layman.

The point is, that when layman and expert did team up to rebuild, they had to take hold of an existing situation and they had to take hold of facts, those stubbornest of all things to deal with. On the one hand, the experts found that the wishes of individuals were legitimate desires that had roots deeper than theory. On the other hand, the laymen began to realize that the most realistic, most selfish dedication to individual interest was in the long run a bad thing even for most individuals, since by definition it could not be generalized into the nation's interest.

Out of urgent necessities, therefore, were born the

whole collection of agencies, programs, personnel, and policies that are called the New Deal. And out of such exigencies was born the agricultural program of the present. These structures designed to adapt government to people's needs were built out of the materials at hand and they were built to meet immediate, pressing needs.

The same thing is happening now as we wage war. Of all national crises, war is the greatest. The pressures that are generated in the effort to preserve national existence are bound to be far greater than those generated in the effort to strengthen the economy. As in the early thirties the government now is forced to act swiftly. It cannot be deterred from forceful action by vague fears of minor undesirable accompaniments of such action. Literally nothing can be allowed to stand in the way of victory.

Yet in the decade just finished, the country was building for this war as surely as if it had known it was coming. When France fell, even when Pearl Harbor was attacked, the country had to use for defense and then for war, the tools of production, the devices of government, that had been built in the years of peace to meet the needs of peace. The people did not know when they voted endorsements of the Agricultural Adjustment Administration that a day was coming when that machinery would be very useful in meeting the needs of a nation and its allies in a war for survival. They did not know when they approved many other related actions in the late twenties and early thirties that they were getting the framework set up for this day. That knowledge is never possible in human actuality; it is always necessary to build the future on the present, just as the present has grown out of the past.

Much of what was done in an agricultural and industrial way has already been treated in these pages. It remains here to look more closely at the problems of peace, and more closely at some of the ways in which the nation can use and expand the machinery it has at hand for dealing with those problems, particularly those of agriculture.

Nearly all of us agree now that there is no final, unchanging reason for anyone in this country to be without food, without clothing, or without shelter. Indeed, we are all pretty sure this country can do a great deal better than merely affording a bare minimum of these basic needs of life. There may be some debate about just what level of living can be reached by how many people, but there is no longer much argument about the capacity of our nation's plant to give every single person the material means of a full life.

That is one part of the future that almost everyone wants and believes we can have. Going on a step farther and trying to see how this kind of world would look, rose-colored spectacles are not needed to see a land overflowing with today's kind of milk and honey. It would be a land where people lived in good homes among green fields, lived in the warmth of security against want and with the inner warmth that comes from making or growing themselves a part of the goods that make up that living.

The countryside of that day can look like this, and the whole nation can be that countryside.

There need be no slum, urban or rural, from one end of the country to the other; there need be no swarming of men prisoned by day and by night among stone piles of cities.

Yet there need be no loss of the social or artistic values that have been made possible through the development of cities. We need cities, naturally, just as we need the country. Each contributes to the culture of the other, and is a part of it. But what kind of world will we in this country have to work in, the democracies having survived this crisis? We have learned that we cannot get away from the rest of the world and that the Atlantic and the Pacific are highways, not barriers.

### *The United Nations in War and Peace*

President Roosevelt and Prime Minister Churchill wrote the charter for that kind of world in the eight points of the "Atlantic Charter." Upon that base, it is possible to build a better world, a world within which this nation can achieve the kind of countryside that is envisioned in the preceding paragraphs. And the concrete implementations of the Atlantic Charter are going on every day in the economic dealings of the United States with the others of the United Nations.

It is proposed in this chapter to examine in some detail the situation in which American agriculture will find itself at the end of the war, and to outline briefly the part that agriculture can and should play in the building of a greater nation. Yet as a prelude to that examination, it will be well to look more closely at the kind of international arrangements under which the war is being fought. Like all producers of raw materials, American farmers in the most recent decades have been at a disadvantage with other producing groups. The welfare of farmers, more than that of any other major group of the United States' population, hinges upon world trade circumstances. Just

as we have seen how the lines are being laid domestically that will condition what can be done after the war, so in our foreign affairs a framework is being erected. The best close-up of that framework is afforded by inspection of the lend-lease agreements.

The lend-lease agreements, the international wheat agreement, and other similar actions are themselves beginning to line out the patterns that will condition what is to be done in bringing international order out of international chaos. Since March, 1941, most of our exports to countries now numbered among the United Nations have been under the terms of the Lend-Lease Act. Those were, at first, our peacetime contribution to nations aiding our defense by resisting Axis aggression. Now they are an instrument by which we strengthen our allies according to the strategic plans of the United Nations as a whole. In the 15-month period from March, 1941, through May, 1942, lend-lease aid totaled 4.5 billion dollars. In May, 1942, the rate of lend-lease aid approximated 8 billion dollars per year, about 7 per cent of the estimated national income of the United States for 1942.

Under the Lend-Lease Act, appropriations are made by Congress and transfers are made from other funds to carry out the national policy of furnishing goods, for both military and essential civilian use, to friendly countries in need of them. Food, steel, guns, planes, ships, services, medical equipment—the scope of our aid is limited only by what is needed in winning the war. Ships are repaired, defense information is furnished the allies, pilots of the United Nations are trained, equipment for railroads and industrial plants is sent where needed. Although the British Commonwealth has received the bulk of our aid, under



the present program assistance to other nations is steadily increasing. And the lend-lease program is more than a side issue in our war program; it can even be considered a keystone in our effort to assure national security for generations to come.

Lend-lease aid is of two principal kinds: goods and services. Goods include military items such as planes, tanks, guns, and ammunition, as well as food, medical supplies, machine tools, metals, and other materials. Services include the shipping necessary to carry goods to lend-lease countries, the servicing and repair of warships and merchant ships of the United Nations, new factory and shipyard facilities for supply bases abroad, and training of pilots and technicians in the United States. In June, 1942, the roll of countries designated by President Roosevelt as eligible for lend-lease assistance included the members of the British Commonwealth of Nations and 35 other countries, including not only the major nations actively fighting the war but also the Latin-American nations, governments in exile from occupied countries, and small nations throughout the world whose hopes for freedom rest on an allied victory.

All of the United Nations contribute what they can to the common pool of resources. Some are able to give materials, others industrial and military information, others can give men and a desire to fight in the common cause. In his report to Congress in June, 1942, on lend-lease operations, the President said, "It is for this reason that American, Canadian, and British tanks are found in North Africa, and American planes, based in England, fly regularly over Germany, that British and American planes fight in Russia and English antiaircraft guns defend our

bases. This is why the United States sends food to Great Britain while American troops on British and Australian soil are being maintained and equipped in part with British and Australian materials and weapons; and why the patents, secret processes, production know-how, and battle experience of each United Nation are available to the armies and industries of its allies."

Under the stated policy of the lend-lease administrators, "normal considerations of international commerce, finance, and foreign exchange are not permitted to interfere with fundamental war needs." In other words, this nation has adopted wholeheartedly the philosophy that winning the war is an end so desirable in itself that, to win, it will forget if necessary the idea of international commerce for profit. The objective of our foreign trade is now the achievement of a desirable end—the winning of the war—and we accept the sacrifices these lend-lease exports mean to ourselves. For there are things more important in the world than the gain or loss of dollars. When it is considered that the true costs of war are blood and toil, and that after the war a nation can never recover its losses of men, it is only rational that the granting of war materials to our allies be on a basis of requirements of the cause, not profit from the trade.

But never before have war or international loans been so considered. Goods and credits extended in World War I were based on the assumption that they were a loan to be repaid with interest. Although after the war these loans were not repaid, except for token payments, the underlying idea that the loans were to be repaid, and that the American people were to profit by their collection, was a tragic mistake that contributed much to present

world difficulties. Repayment of the earlier war loans was incompatible with the rebuilding of strong nations, the maintenance of customary trade relationships, the utilization of labor and productive resources in the United States. Collection could have been made only if the United States had drained the other nations of their resources, refused them freedom to rebuild their financial institutions, upset our own industrial and agricultural development, and utilized our workers in selling services, likely unwanted, to the other nations. All this would have involved military control of the debtor nations, and the denial both to them and to ourselves of the freedoms for which we fight.

Under stress of war, international trade is recognized as serving purposes much greater than the realization of profit and the raising of standards of living, its traditional objectives. And as Americans have pledged their resources without limit to win the war, so they need to pledge themselves to win the peace which will follow. Already the country has expressed its determination to use foreign trade as an instrument of mutual benefit after the war. Almost equal in significance, after the all-important purpose of winning the war, is the expressed policy in the lend-lease agreements that no final determination of the lend-lease account will be made until "the extent of the defense aid is known and until the progress of events makes clearer the final terms and conditions and benefits which will be in the mutual interests" of the signatory nations, and which "will promote the establishment and maintenance of world peace."

Article VII of the basic agreements with Great Britain, China, and Russia pledges that the final determination

of the benefits to be provided the United States in return for lend-lease aid "shall be such as not to burden commerce between the two countries, but to promote mutually advantageous economic relations between them and the betterment of worldwide economic relations." In pledging this, we have committed ourselves to an economic policy in which we will settle the bookkeeping of international trade in the interests of the mutual welfare of the peoples concerned, not in the interest of profits or commercial debts or a nice balancing of sacrifices made in the war. The bookkeeping of this war is not to result in post-war domination of one nation by another, by the upsetting of established productive systems, by international transfer of funds resulting in deflation and economic depression, by the forced devaluation of currencies, and by instability of international financial arrangements.

The fact that the United States may not receive payment in money or goods for lend-lease materials does not mean a real loss. If these exports result in the maintenance of freedom, the expenditures will entail a small sacrifice compared to others the nation makes in this war. This sentiment toward the purpose of world trade is spreading throughout the United Nations, and not only because they are largely on the receiving end. For even now lend-lease works in two directions, and our allies send special supplies from their stores which are vitally needed in American war production plans, with the same recognition that the war need is more important than the settlement of profit accounts in currency.

Abroad as well as at home, the American people have come to recognize that the ends of the social and eco-

conomic system are not only the making of profit, nor even so simple a thing as raising the standard of living. There are concepts of freedom, of social values, of democratic principles that are all vitally influenced by the policies of a nation in international trade. Whether trade is used for business profit or greater ends must be our decision to make. The Axis enemies have maliciously used devices in international trade to undermine the democracies, but through their devices we have discovered how efficiently the lever of international trade can be used for specific purposes. These levers apply not only in controlled trade, but also in so-called free trade—that ideal state of economic theory which fails to recognize that international boundaries exist for a specific purpose, that with free trade actually realized the identity of nations would be lost. For free trade has necessary prerequisites of unlimited migration of people, capital, patents, customs, as well as the removal of direct trade barriers such as tariffs. In addition, free trade does not contemplate the forced sale of services, such as those offered by colonial administrations to subject countries within imperial “free trade” systems. The American problem in the post-war world will be to select the objective for world trade, and in this problem the initial efforts of the nations at war are now showing the way.

By the close of this war, then, changed ideas probably will still be taken of the function of both production and distribution. There will remain at the end of the war the vast government organizations established for the specific purpose of winning the war, and for controlling domestic and economic commerce for that purpose. The problem of post-war America will then be the disposal of these vast

governmental controls, the making of a decision as to whether they should be perpetuated, abolished, or turned into instruments for guidance of the effort of the nation toward achieving the "four freedoms." These freedoms will not be won when the war is won—for winning the war is, in reality, the mere winning of the opportunity to move closer toward these freedoms.

Reconstruction will require the formulation of plans, the making of decisions, on a scale never before necessary in the group relationships among men and nations. Greatest of all will be the problem of distribution of goods so that this plenty for all can find the consumers. As Sumner Welles, Under-Secretary of State, has said, "The problem which will confront us when the years of the post-war period are reached is not primarily one of production. For the world can readily produce what mankind requires. The problem is rather one of distribution and purchasing power; of providing the mechanism whereby what the world produces may be fairly distributed among the nations of the world; and of providing the means whereby the people of the world may obtain the world's goods and services." Here is the great contrast to wartime government and economic organization, for in war production is the great problem—production that is primarily an engineering or physical problem in which the end is taken for granted and the purpose is definite. In the post-war world production can be ample, but solutions to the problems of distribution of goods and purchasing power will include the more intangible elements of social purposes, of psychology, of ethical and moral values themselves. These are the critical elements, for they are the ones men have found it hardest to agree upon. Yet the

only possible solutions compatible with a free world are the solutions agreed upon by the vast masses of mankind. In more usual terms, the rapid extension of self-government throughout the world is an inescapable corollary of complete victory.

### *There Is No Substitute for Freedom*

In the post-war world an attitude toward international trade as realistic as in war will be necessary. When peace comes, an addition will have been made to the importance of foreign trade as a means of obtaining goods either not produced here or else not produced efficiently. This addition is the knowledge that international trade is an instrument which if used properly can accomplish the goals of peace and freedom between nations. If a nation is in difficulty because of lack of certain goods, and if other nations refuse to furnish them because it is not profitable, in dollar exchange, to do so, the world again will lie open to measures of force, of aggression, of war. Under lend-lease operations at present international trade is used for the definite purpose of winning the war. In building a stable peace international trade can be used to overcome the differentials of resources, of population, of mechanical efficiency which have disrupted the world. Only by a carefully plotted and generously executed use of international trade for this purpose can national lines be preserved peacefully. For, although in preserving national identity it may not be desirable to permit free migration of people and resources, yet in preserving international peace and well-being it is vital that goods be furnished the people of the world who do not have them.

After the lessons of this war, its termination is not likely

to see the end of foreign trade arrangements colored by the sentiment which now motivates the furnishing of supplies under lend-lease provisions. Probably the idea will stick of using goods for the mutual benefit of every nation, not for the profit of any one. This is true not only because of the growth of patterns of international cooperation among the United Nations, representing the vast preponderance of the world's population. It is true also because this war is rapidly removing the remaining structure of an international trade based on exchange between industrial and agricultural countries. All nations now are building their own industries, and doing so at great speed. Colonial domination has proved unprofitable as an approach to world security.

Any proposal for putting ideas such as these to work at once is challenged on the ground that the goal of full employment within this nation and certain aspects of international trade have apparently irreconcilable conflicts. This is the traditional concept that when a foreign nation needs goods which this nation is able to furnish, but which it is unable to buy because we also produce the goods which it offers in exchange, our acceptance of its goods in exchange would throw our own workers out of employment. This conflict is, of course, not irreconcilable at all once the goal of full employment and mutual benefit to all nations is truly accepted. For domestic policy must be interwoven with foreign policy, and if it is in the national interest to foster trade that will react unfavorably on some producing units, it must become the policy of the nation to provide for its own displaced workers by absorption into other industries. Transitions can be cushioned by direct or indirect aid to the industry affected on



the basis of sharing both the burdens and the advantages of the change in trade relationships.

In all this discussion of the post-war world there has been a tacit assumption that the people of this nation, and others, really want a world of peace, of plenty for all, of action for mutual benefit both at home and abroad. The evidence is impressive that this assumption is justified, and that it is the hope of the majority of people everywhere. In itself, then, it is a principle based on democratic values. But there is another assumption, too—one that cannot be dismissed so quickly. That is the idea that in a post-war world men may forget the terrible necessity of cooperative organization and action in the improvement of human and national relationships, that without the pressure of war men will again lapse into the luxury of bickering, unemployment, selfishness, exploitation. During the war emergency it is easy to get tacit agreement among most people on what should be done in peace. But peace may quickly dull sensibilities now more alert than ever before in history to the issues of freedom and equality.

If this war should end in the downfall of democracy, we could be certain that there would be no lasting peace. For under dictatorial control the resources of the world would certainly be used for the benefit of the dominant people, for the particular benefit of the ruling group within that people. But even the victory of the United Nations will leave a danger, the danger that selfish utilization of world resources might be achieved by chance leaders seizing upon new disillusionment among peoples who feel they have lost in peace the liberty they waged war to gain.

The lessons are written plain in the course of the war itself. Wherever people have had something to fight for, the aggressor countries have had hard going. Wherever, as in the Philippines, the masses of people have felt that liberty was the end toward which they were fighting, they have been bitter-end fighters against Axis oppression. No more than apathy is to be expected from peoples who are offered merely a change in masters. Even when the change is from a gentle despotism to a severe despotism, the choice is not one that arouses people anywhere to stand up and fight. The moral is inescapable: There is no substitute for freedom.

In our own country, too, there are areas of privilege on the one hand, and of underprivilege on the other. It does not become us to point fingers at other nations. It is true that we believe that in the United States more people have more to say about their own lives than anywhere else in the world. Yet much remains to be done in cutting away rotten spots of discrimination, of economic abuse, of caste. So far as the United States has succeeded in doing this during the war, by so much has it succeeded in mobilizing its full power for victory.

For the world at large, too, there can be no turning back now. This war has committed the nations of the world to one side or the other. Our side is that of democracy, of freedom and equality. The faith of our side is a faith that cannot be betrayed without throwing the world into a new dark age. The United Nations are committed irrevocably not only to preserving democracy against destruction by arms, but to its spread throughout the world. "Without hope, the people perish." The great democracies have

rallied people all over the world to their aid by holding out before them the torch of this hope. Upon peril of their own survival, they cannot let that torch go out.

### *War Needs and the Shape of the Future*

Individuals who live from day to day with no thought for the future may escape disaster; nations rarely, if ever.

Maintenance of the peace will call for even more careful planning in some respects than winning the war. It is far easier to rally people for timely, united action when the foe is a tangible enemy that comes with screaming planes and crashing bombs than it is to rally them against the disaster brought on by neglected social or economic ills.

Farmers and other citizens, statesmen, and public officials can begin now to discuss and plan for the programs they will need some day to avert a depression. Otherwise, they may have to plan at a later day how to pull themselves out of a depression, and how to remedy the evils that come with it. Freedom from want in the future demands anticipation of the problems that will confront the nation at the end of the war.

Interviews conducted in the spring and summer of 1942 in various parts of the country indicate that the majority of farmers are expecting a depression after this war, or in any event that "things will be in bad shape." In this respect they are more pessimistic than residents of cities. Comparatively few farmers think that "times will be better," in an economic sense.

Many of the farmers who expect a depression believe it will be the worst in history. They reason that depressions always follow wars, and that the biggest war will

inevitably produce the biggest depression. Nearly one-fourth of the farmers interviewed spontaneously mentioned the government as the logical agency for preventing a post-war depression. Not quite half of this latter group advocate government action to maintain the price and wage structure. The others either thought the government should assist in maintaining employment and markets, or favored "governmental action" or "financial planning and control" or "general planning and economic control." A scattered few suggested that the nation should continue to maintain a large army and to produce war goods.

The minority who think a depression will be avoided cite the backlog of consumer demand created by war privation and the probable necessity of "feeding Europe" as justification for their belief.

It is especially important to take note of the fact that a large part of the inflation growing out of the last war occurred after the Armistice had been signed. Such economic controls as were imposed tended to be too little, too late, and too soon abandoned after the war. Americans were intent on getting "back to normalcy," fed up with all wartime restraints. As a result, the price level soared upward throughout 1919 and most of 1920, and then came down in 1921. The real crash was postponed another decade, thanks in large measure to the practice of pouring out post-war international loans parallel with a trade policy that effectively blocked any likelihood that these loans would be repaid.

There is every reason to hope that the steps now being taken under the President's seven-point program to keep down the cost of living will at the least regulate rises in

prices. The real danger is that the American people will again give way at the end of the war to a desire to cast aside all wartime measures. The accumulated wants of millions of citizens who have put off buying all manner of durable goods might then be unleashed faster than war industries could be converted to satisfy those wants. If that should occur, it could easily lead to inflation, a boom, "overproduction," a levelling off, and then depression.

Conversion to peace is the first big problem that will confront farmers and other citizens after this war. It must be a positive transition to all-out production for the war on want—not a mere dismantling of our war industries and our armed forces.

It should not be as difficult to do what will need to be done in agriculture as in industry. In the first place, agriculture during the war is producing a record volume of food and materials with fewer workers than usual. Farmers are learning to spread their work more evenly through the year, particularly by rearranging their cropping plans, by repairing machinery, and by chopping wood in slack seasons. They are letting animals harvest feed crops—hogging off corn, for example. They are using more self-feeders, self-waterers, electric fences, more milking machines and other labor-saving devices. They are rearranging field boundaries to accommodate large-scale machinery, swapping work with neighbors, making more efficient use of family labor, relying more on custom harvesting.

Farmers are cutting down on time-consuming trips to town by buying larger quantities of food at a time, hiring truckers to take their produce to town, storing and using more home-grown foods and feeds. Older men par-

ticularly are shifting from intensive to extensive enterprises to conserve their strength—from dairy production to other types of livestock, for example. In the East, many of them are renting out fields to younger neighbors. All of these measures and others like them are increasing output per worker. Incidentally, this new efficiency in itself is adding to the net income of many a farmer, wholly apart from the higher prices he is receiving for his produce.

True, there still are pools of underemployed farm people in certain areas. But by and large agriculture should have relatively few workers to transfer out of farming. Even if there should be a slump in demand for certain types of farm products requiring a parallel reduction in the number of farm laborers, much of the slack could be taken up by retirement from the work force of women and children who are doing farm work only because the wartime emergency demands it. Stricter child labor laws and higher educational standards will be desirable in any event.

Farm products may be more in demand, not less, after the war, if the nation endeavors to improve the nutrition of its own people and shares in the job of feeding war-torn countries. If this is the case, all of the present workers in agriculture may be kept fully employed.

Undoubtedly there will be shifts in the types of farm products most needed for the post-war economy, as soon as imports and exports are resumed between the United States and countries now cut off from us by the war. But these shifts will be made easier by the fact that farmland, buildings, machinery, and breeding stock are more flexible in their uses than most industrial facilities.

There will, of course, be extensive depletion of capital resources on many farms. Paints, lumber, machinery, all sorts of replacements and repairs will become increasingly hard to get as the war intensifies and an even larger share of our resources are converted to war production or direct use by the armed forces. As more and more manpower is drained away, farmers will have less time to keep up the appearance of their homes and farm buildings. If the demand for food materials grows desperate as the war goes on, we may yet be compelled into a moratorium on present minimum conservation efforts and throw everything into the breach for the final drive to victory. The ever-present possibility that a shortage of doctors will compel many farm people to put off medical attention, even at the risk of impaired efficiency, cannot be ignored. All these deficiencies will confront the nation at the end of the war, and demand attention.

After every war, there has been a "back-to-the-land" movement. The countryside has also been a haven for "surplus" industrial workers in periods of depression, and for white-collar workers in flight from the cities.

Up to the present century, there was always plenty of free land "out west" for the returning soldier. But "out west" moved quickly from the Alleghenies to the Corn belt, to the Plains, and finally reached the Pacific Coast. From then on, the soldier and the unemployed laborer were generally limited in their choice to poorer lands that had been passed over or abandoned by earlier homesteaders. A few, of course, found good tracts in still-developing areas or on irrigation projects.

Even more than its predecessors the back-to-the-land movement of the 1930's was characterized by a desperate

effort to find a shelter secure against eviction and a patch of land that would provide some foodstuffs.

Since the war began, many farm men and boys have entered the armed forces; many more have taken jobs in war industries. At the end of the war, large numbers of them may wish to return to farming. Certainly they are sure to want to do this if employment opportunities in peacetime industry do not expand as rapidly as men are demobilized from military service and war industries. An extensive, unguided back-to-the-land movement creating new areas of malnutrition, poor housing, and generally substandard living may occur unless effective measures are taken to prevent it.

### *When Johnny Comes Marching Home*

Agriculture's answers to the problems posed by the return of peace are inseparably linked to the decisions that are made relative to demobilization of the armed forces and conversion of industry. These interrelationships are particularly apparent with reference to the future of war plants in rural areas. Many of these plants have drawn heavily upon unemployed and underemployed farmers, farm laborers, and residents of small towns.

When the war ends, some of these plants can be converted to other uses in the civilian economy. But many of them will be compelled to close unless they can find some useful peacetime task as yet undiscovered. To the degree that agriculture in the areas around these latter plants has become reoriented to existing conditions, it is likely to suffer if the plants are closed and the workers turned out to shift for themselves.

Another impact of the war and related activities that



should be closely watched is their effect upon the size and distribution of ownership. It is evident already that some concentration of ownership is taking place, but it is too early to say definitely how much of this is good and how much bad. Some farmers are adding more land to their present operating units. If these additions can be paid for quickly out of current income and if they permit more efficient use of labor and equipment, then of course their owners will be in good economic shape. From this standpoint such changes are desirable if they serve to enlarge farms that were formerly too small to adequately support a family. But, on the other hand, enlargement of single farm units on a grand scale will also pose in aggravated form the question of the future of the traditional owner-operated, family-sized farm. Moreover, if the land transfers represent speculative investments, they can increase tenancy or inflate land values—a result definitely on the red-ink side of the social ledger. American agriculture can ill afford to come through this war with as great a burden of mortgage debts and high-priced land as plagued it at the end of the last war and for years afterward.

Preliminary estimates based on a recent survey indicate that around two-fifths of the transfers in ownership which took place in the first quarter of 1942 were for the purpose of enlarging present operating units. In all, three-fourths of the transfers were for purposes of operation. Another fourth of the land was bought by non-farmers to be leased as an investment or pending resale.

In the Mississippi Delta and the Great Plains there have been many contract sales requiring only a small down pay-

ment in cash. There have been several reports from the Plains in recent years of prospective buyers who inquire first of all about the farm allotments, and buy if they think the conservation payments will be large enough to meet the interest on their debt. Sales in which very little cash changes hands are obviously fraught with danger for the future well-being of agriculture as a whole. The nation should be particularly jealous lest the long upward trend in farm tenancy be resumed after a turn downward from 1935 to 1940.

No view of the situation likely to confront farmers at the end of the war is complete unless it takes cognizance of the ills yet uncured at the start of the war that will inevitably survive it.

The Farm Housing Survey made eight years ago indicated that nearly 700,000 farm dwellings were then beyond repair; and that more than 15,000,000 repair jobs were needed on the more than 7,000,000 occupied farm homes. Conservatively, it can be said that construction of at least 2 or 3 million new houses in rural areas would now be necessary to provide minimum adequate housing for all farm people. It is doubtful whether the situation can be improved under wartime shortages of manpower and materials.

To provide a fully adequate diet for all our people in 1941 without rationing and without allowances for exports, we would have had to devote perhaps one-tenth more land to crops than we actually did. Assuming average yields and above-average consumption on the part of some individual families within each income group, we should need perhaps two-thirds more land in truck

crops; roughly one-fifth more in potatoes, in sugar and sirup crops, and in hay crops; one-tenth more land in fruits, in feed grains, and in beans, peas, and nut crops.

We should need at least one-third more milk cows, one-fifth more hens, and at least a 10 per cent increase in sheep and lambs. On the other hand, we could perhaps get along with 2 or 3 per cent fewer head of beef cattle than we had in 1941, 4 per cent fewer hogs, and slightly less land in grains for food.

The significant thing about these estimates, which are only tentative, is the fact that they indicate that we may need a greater production than in 1941 in most lines, to feed our own people adequately after the war. To fulfill our reconstruction obligations to help check starvation around the world after the war, we should need infinitely more production. Indeed, it may be necessary for us to continue rationing a number of foods after the war to add to our stockpiles for export until the agriculture of the war-torn nations can be rehabilitated, in keeping with the lend-lease philosophy already outlined earlier in this chapter.

This country's obligations under the Atlantic Charter may be said to extend beyond mere relief from starvation to a full alliance in the battle of free men the world over for liberation from want. That obligation has tremendous implications for American agriculture.

It is of interest that a committee of technicians drawn from many branches of the Department of Agriculture, after a careful study of the nation's wartime production capacity, has come to the conclusion that with normal yields the total output of farm products that will be feasible in 1943 is practically the same as the estimated pro-

duction in 1942. Any increase at all can be attained only with the help of adequate programs to assure labor, transportation, and processing.

The picture that emerges from all the many facts of wartime trends and incipient problems is one of great potentialities either for good or evil. If farmers and other citizens make up their minds soon enough as to what they want and set about intelligently and energetically to get it, the agricultural plant can be kept running at full capacity. Farmers can retain their recent economic gains and go on to better levels of living. The entire population can be better fed and better clothed than ever before.

If instead, the American people approach these problems slowly, timidly, this country might easily see the greatest depression of all times—a depression bringing fresh economic, social, and political upheavals in its wake. It might again see mountainous surpluses alongside great valleys of underconsumption, without the power to level them out. There is danger that we may become so deeply engrossed in our present fight for survival that we shall see too late what choices we must make. Once they see the problems involved, there is relatively little likelihood that the American people will fail to meet them courageously.

### *The Tools for Building a Better World*

Many of the programs that will be necessary for the sort of world everyone wants after the war must go through a blueprint stage and a “tooling up” stage. This will entail delays comparable to those which were inevitable before we could translate appropriations for war materials into finished production. The sooner we begin

to get agreement upon what programs, old or new, will be necessary to obtain freedom from want even in this country, the greater chance we shall have to win the peace. A major end of such an attempt would be the renewed assurance of the entire population, civilian and military, that the free world to come is indeed worth fighting for, to the last ounce of energy.

What sort of approaches, old or new, can the people of the United States agree upon now as desirable or necessary to reach the goals of a better agriculture and a better way of life for everyone after the war? The finest peacetime program conceivable would have two strikes against it if it were imposed by governmental authority without the understanding and acceptance of an overwhelming majority of the American people. The farmer, the citizen of every occupation, has an obligation to participate in these discussions and decisions—an obligation which he cannot pass on by proxy to someone else, or let go by default.

In many instances, of course, a great deal of time can be saved by the resumption, modification, or expansion of the programs which have been developed and tested in the last ten years. In other instances it may be necessary to develop completely new programs.

Programs for improving distribution of the necessities of life should be the first to receive attention, inasmuch as they have long lagged behind the development of techniques for production and more recently behind the development of techniques for orderly marketing.

The food stamp program is one of the most significant developments in the entire field of distribution. This plan was inaugurated on an experimental basis on May 16, 1939,

in Rochester, New York. It was so successful that by May of 1941 nearly 3,970,000 people were participating in the program. Since that time there has been some decrease in participation as incomes rose and food "surpluses" declined. The number of areas has increased steadily. By July, 1942, it reached 1445 counties and 88 city areas.

Basically, the Food Stamp Plan is a subsidization of the food-purchasing power of low-income consumers. This is done through the issuance of orange-colored and blue stamps good for the purchase of foods through regular retail outlets. Eligible families can buy orange-colored stamps, good for the purchase of any food products, to an amount at least equal to their normal food expenditures. This is an assurance that these families will continue to buy the normal quantity of food out of their own pockets. The families are then given blue stamps, usually equal in amount to half the value of the orange stamps they have already bought. The orange stamps can be exchanged for any foods, the blue stamps only for those foods on the surplus list proclaimed by the Secretary of Agriculture. The blue stamps, therefore, represent an addition to the family's food-buying power, designed both to increase its consumption of surplus commodities and to improve its nutrition. The program has been popular with recipients and merchants alike.

Similar in mechanics to the Food Stamp Plan was the Cotton Stamp Plan inaugurated in Memphis, Tennessee, on May 7, 1940, and later expanded to other areas. Here again there was a dual objective—to move surplus cotton into consumption channels, and to enable needy families to obtain larger quantities of essential cotton goods. Because of lack of funds and altered conditions during the

war, this program was dropped while still in the experimental stage.

Under the Food Stamp Plan and the Cotton Stamp Plan, the government has bought no crops directly. Direct purchase and distribution of "surplus" farm products has been carried out successfully, however, through other programs. One of the most noteworthy is the School Lunch program, in operation since 1935. Schools participating have been eligible to receive surplus foods for free lunches for needy and undernourished children. The importance of this activity is borne out by estimates of the Children's Bureau of the Department of Labor that at least one-fifth of all school children in the country show physical defects indicative of malnutrition.

Distribution of foodstuffs directly to families on relief and the cotton mattress program are other examples of Federal purchase and distribution of surplus commodities. The relief milk distribution program was begun in October, 1937, as a conventional direct-purchase-and-relief distribution type of project. Under a modified plan later adopted, marketing agreements included a special farm price for relief milk, lower than the Class I price but higher than the price for surplus milk. The government paid only the cost of processing and delivery, and families receiving the milk paid from 4 to 6 cents a quart for it.

Various multiple-price systems have been suggested for moving farm products at a reduced cost to consumers and a reduced return to producers. In the positive sense, the objective of such programs is to remove price-depressing surpluses from the market, and at the same time to provide low-income families with food and clothing they could not otherwise afford. In the negative sense, these programs

should be so designed as to avoid disruption of the normal channels of trade. These domestic programs existing or proposed share in common with the lend-lease philosophy of international exchange a new concept that trade should satisfy wholesome social and political objectives as well as traditional economic goals.

The extent to which government programs to distribute commodities will be needed after the war depends in great measure on the amount and distribution of real national income at that time. Savings are being accumulated now and debts paid off, as a result both of measures taken under the national economic program and of the fact that there is a smaller amount of goods for sale. These savings will be a reservoir of buying power to help tide many a family through the early months of peace. However, War Bonds and other savings will serve a doubly useful function in the national economy if they can be held until they are most needed to stimulate private employment and peacetime commerce. This will mean retaining them wherever possible until conversion of war plants to civilian production has caught up with the first flood of demands that were dammed up during the war.

Other programs may be necessary to maintain employment and buying power in industry and agriculture during the transition to peace. In agriculture, soil, water, and forest conservation work, rural housing, and rural electrification offer opportunities for the employment of large numbers of workers.

As much as possible of this vitally needed work should be accomplished through private initiative. Nevertheless, the nation should be prepared to launch a public works program of whatever magnitude the situation may require



during the demobilization. Obviously, such a program must be planned before it is possible to know just when it will be needed or how extensive it should be. It must be planned in such a way that it can be adapted quickly to the time and to the precise magnitude of the need.

Certain considerations should be kept in mind in planning for a conservation works program on private lands, involving both public and private employment. Wherever the work will add substantially to the value of the land, the owner should either perform it himself with the assistance of government loans or grants, or he should bear a proportionate share of the total expense. On the other hand, it would be proper for the government to bear the entire cost wherever conservation work was undertaken to protect public lands or utilities and where it added little or nothing to the value of the land on which it was performed.

As much emphasis as possible should be placed upon conservation works that are self-liquidating in the sense of repayment to the government. Wherever feasible, such work should be financed through the proceeds of obligations guaranteed by the government rather than through direct appropriations.

Estimates made more than two years ago indicated that needed soil, water, and forest conservation work in the United States would require more than  $1\frac{1}{2}$  billion man-days of labor. This would be equivalent, roughly, to full-time employment for a year for 5 million men.

A proposed program of works projects and credit activities outlined at that time included:

1. A partially self-liquidating forest conservation program carried out by the government through to-lease or

cooperative agreement with the owners of private forest lands.

2. A partially or completely self-liquidating soil and water conservation program executed under cooperative agreements with private owners.

3. Non-liquidating forest, soil, and water conservation work on private land.

4. Conservation works projects financed by government.

Examples of non-liquidating activities suitable for private lands would be the protection of highways or reservoirs, tree plantings in connection with erosion and flood control, shelterbelt plantings in the Prairie States, stand improvement demonstration projects, protection against forest insects and diseases, and an expansion of fire protection.

Proposed credit activities to promote rural conservation include:

1. Loans to forest products enterprises for needed business purposes, conditional upon the adoption of sound forest conservation practice.

2. Inclusion in all tenant-purchase loans of adequate amounts for conservation work.

3. Short-term conservation loans to farm cooperative associations engaged in such activity as terracing or limestone crushing.

4. Long-term conservation loans by the government for conservation purposes.

5. A farm mortgage refinancing program as an incident to which funds would be made available for needed conservation work by farm-owners.

6. A combination loan and grant program to enable

low-income farm families to perform more needed conservation work.

Little more than 10 per cent of the farms in the United States were electrified in 1934. The following year, the Rural Electrification Administration was established. By June 30, 1942, electricity reached about 40 per cent of the nation's farms. A program to extend electric lines and facilities to the other 60 per cent would offer a vast opportunity for employment after the war. So, too, would a program to fill the deficit in rural housing.

In the field of public works, there is a crying need in many rural areas for hospital facilities, improved or consolidated school buildings, better farm-to-market roads. Construction of quick-freezing plants, food-storage facilities, and structures for flood control, irrigation, and electric power—all these are potential sources of employment during the transition from war to peace.

If our distributive machinery is made anywhere near adequate to meet all human needs, we shall need to bring production up to a new peak limited only by requirements of the individual worker for rest and recreation and the over-all necessity of maintaining balance among the different elements and kinds of production.

It is for this reason that production, normally given first place in any discussion, has been reserved here to the last.

### *Production When Peace Comes*

After this war, it is hardly probable that the world should know any real over-all surpluses for many years to come. If producers cannot sell, it will be a sign that consumers are too poor to buy—a sign, moreover, that the

producers collectively must find some goods or services they are willing to accept in exchange for the things they have to offer.

In the United States citizens who have seen national income climb from the depression low of 40 billion dollars in 1932 to a wartime peak of 110 to 115 billions 10 years later and perhaps still more before the war is over, will not be content to drop back much below the 100-billion mark. People who have recently known the taste of full employment will not be convinced that full employment in peacetime is impossible.

The first step in planning wartime agricultural production programs has been to estimate the requirements of our armed forces, our allies, and our own civilian population. The next step was to determine how and where we could get the production to meet those requirements. This has involved a continuous job of appraising the capacity of the agricultural plant, under many governing assumptions, including the need at various points in the war, the limitations of storage, processing facilities and transportation, and the shifting requirements for different kinds of crops. Moreover, the job meant that such appraisals were needed both nationally and at state and county levels.

Unless farmers have some very bad luck before all their crops are harvested, it looks as though total agricultural production will be 10 per cent above 1941, as compared to a minimum goal of 6 per cent above 1941. Nevertheless, this production still may not obviate the need for rationing many foods, inasmuch as the requirements of our allies and our expeditionary forces are expanding more rapidly than our production.

The Food Requirements Committee established in the summer of 1942 under the chairmanship of Secretary Wickard was given the task of determining military, allied, and domestic food requirements for 1943 and beyond. Meanwhile the Department of Agriculture conducted the most extensive survey ever made of the nation's capacity for agricultural production. Together these estimates form the basis for assessing needed 1943 agricultural production, and for taking the steps that need to be taken to get that production, including shifts between types of production. Greater emphasis will be placed during the coming year on establishment and fulfillment of individual farm production goals.

This machinery will be useful after the Axis is beaten, in the war on want.

With wartime trade barriers swept away, food requirements after the war will be based on relief for the war-torn countries pending their agricultural rehabilitation, and on adequate nutrition of the people of the United States. On the production side, too, many actual or potential wartime obstacles should disappear—for example, shortages of labor, fertilizers, processing facilities, storage and transportation, shortages or obsolescence of equipment.

Special programs may be required to speed the removal of some of these obstacles, but the process of removal in itself should create a fresh demand for civilian goods and services and so help to maintain industrial employment, and through it, a continuing market for farm products as well as opportunity for work outside agriculture.

Many of the programs established to help farmers cope with surpluses or to promote conservation and orderly marketing are proving equally useful now in expanding production. They should prove equally adaptable to the

needs of the post-war period, provided farmers continue to be aware of the need for making shifts within such a framework and of the need for the Ever-Normal Granary to adjust too-high prices downward as well as too-low prices upward.

Agricultural adjustment payments and crop loans are effective in helping to increase production or to shift it from surplus crops to those most needed to fill nutritional deficits. Conservation practices—crop rotation, fertilization, water conservation in the Great Plains and the West, erosion control—are doubly useful when the goal is all-out production. Loans to rehabilitate small farmers and to enable young tenants to become owners have the double value of increasing security and facilitating greater production.

### *The Will to Do It*

The end-product of all the programs for production and distribution added together, should be increased human welfare, greater security, higher levels of living.

The exact definition of a family-sized farm and the exact number of people who are attempting or should attempt to make a living from the land, are not half so important as the current living conditions of those who actually are engaged in agriculture at any one time. Agriculture could be depressed after the war even if there were fewer farmers than ever before. It could reach new heights of prosperity even with increased numbers of people dependent upon it.

This sketch of some of the agricultural programs needed in the future is by no means intended to be complete. There are many other aspects of agricultural welfare that need to be included in programming. Retraining of

many soldiers, sailors, and war-industry workers for new jobs in either industry or agriculture will be necessary. Techniques developed in adult education, vocational education short courses, and 4-H club work can be called into service for this task.

Much remains to be done through educational programs in the whole field of production, nutrition, and the arts of better living. Sound agricultural credit will have its part to play in many phases. Programs to encourage co-operative buying and selling can help materially in rounding out a better life. Above all, attention should be directed to the development of programs to increase the security of farm labor, both of the traditional "farm hand" and the migrant family. A counterpart of wages and hours laws, unemployment insurance, and old-age assistance is sorely needed.

Such programs must be worked out carefully, thoughtfully, to avoid undue hardship to any group or sudden disruption of the existing agricultural pattern. However, the majority of farm operators probably will end the war in a better position financially than they have known for many a year. Manpower shortages have already compelled them to adjust their operations to a higher wage-scale. There is no inherent reason why these gains for the operator and the laborer alike cannot be preserved and built upon after the war.

Crop insurance, research on new uses for agricultural products, and research leading to new technological improvements—all these programs can help farmers to attain security and a better level of living.

One of the most fertile fields of all for pioneering in new agricultural programs lies in the promotion of meas-

ures that will develop inherent values in rural life, measures of the type outlined in a special report published in 1940, on "Technology on the Farm."

This report called attention to the need for development and adaptation of technical devices in such a way as to lighten the burden of farm labor and to make rural life more attractive. It cited the desirability of programs for conservation and improvement of rural facilities to stabilize rural settlement and so develop a more permanent rural life. It suggested a type of cultural education to enhance the appeal of farm life, and the development of new or experimental patterns such as labor allotment cottages, self-sufficing small holdings, self-help cooperatives, rural training, handicrafts, and cooperative farming.

The summary was particularly prophetic:

"In our consideration of problems and remedies, we should not assume that industrial expansion—the best way to absorb those who have no particular desire to remain in agriculture—has ceased for all time.

"Something like a huge defense program may be a key to industrial expansion; if so, certain of the suggested remedies no longer will be needed so badly.

"But of several considerations we should be mindful: Industrial expansion may be temporary and lead only to a recurrence of the problems we have been encountering; we should seek permanent stability for American farming; over a long period, it should be possible for the United States to adjust its economy in a way that will permit expansion of production in industry and agriculture. That would make possible a higher level of living for the entire population. That is our goal."



Inevitably, the question recurs in such discussions, How are we going to do it?

One answer is that we do not need to fear anything more than fear itself, to paraphrase the President's words, in this as in other things. We see all around us now what this nation can do when it has to meet a great emergency. Whenever the times have called it forth, we have always found the will and the energy to do the job.

Less than ten years ago the country was threatened by an internal paralysis that tested the mettle of our people severely. Today, under stress of war, we are showing the tremendous productive heights that can be reached. When peace comes, the only thing that can keep us from turning our whole land into a green and blooming countryside will be our state of mind. Nothing has stopped Americans when they really wanted to do something.

This is not a new thing; it has been a part of our national character ever since the founding of the colonies. It is necessary only to recall the winning of the West and the building of our great cities to see the tremendous unstoppable energies that can be released if the people have a mind to. The answer to defeatists now is the same answer given to those early defeatists who thought that the Ohio River was buried too deep in wilderness ever to be an American frontier.

The only real problem in reaching this goal, and the larger national goal, is how the people can channel their energy, organize it, and, in so doing, keep their freedom. We did it before when we built the West, when we built our cities, when we conquered the frontiers of fear of the 1930's. We did this and kept our freedoms. We have lost none of our liberties. We need not ever lose them.

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